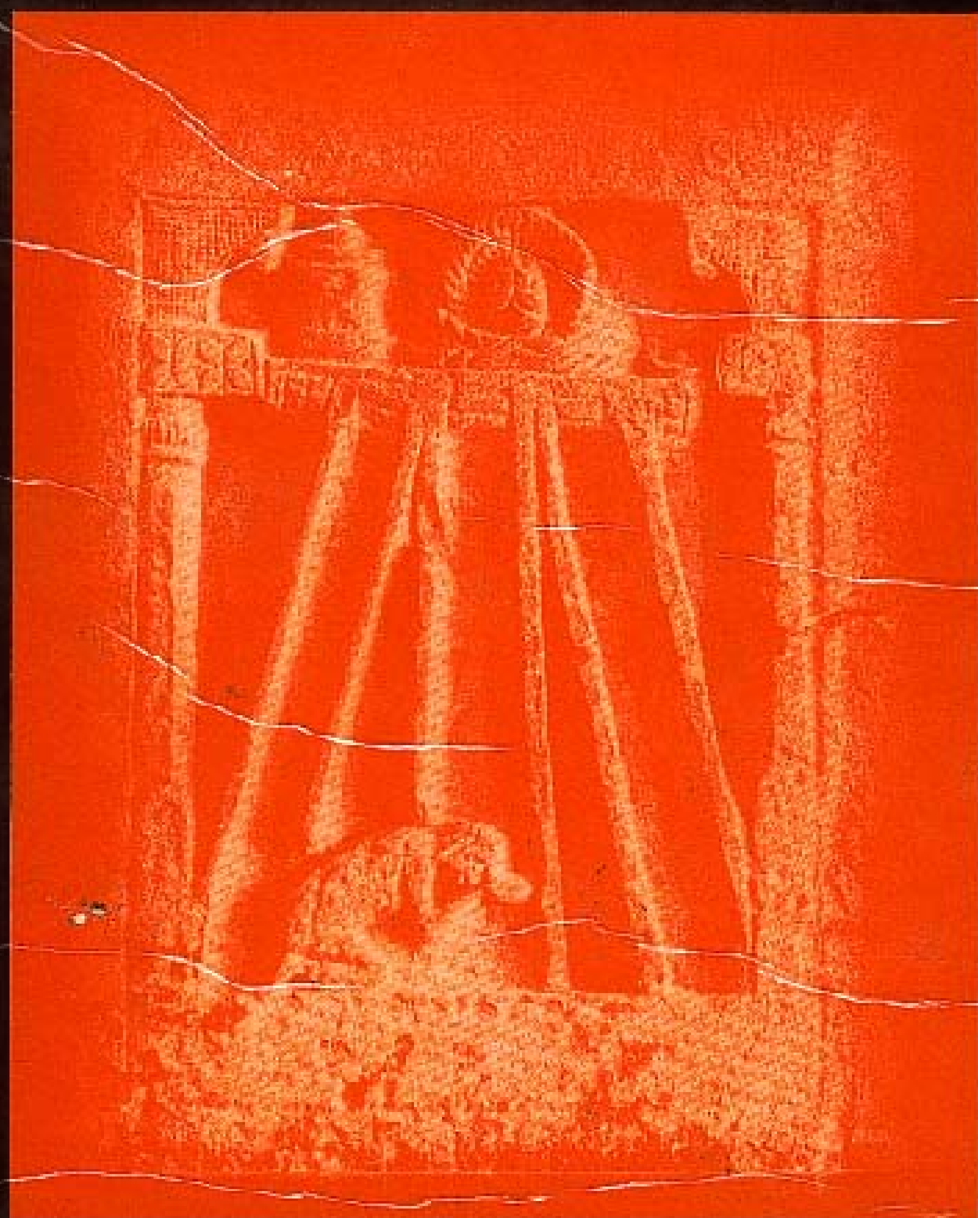
# THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE BUDDHA LEGEND



SARLA KHOSLA

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## INTRODUCTION

The present work, "The Historical Evolution of Buddha Legend" is a unique attempt of its own kind. In it, I have tried historically to dig out the important events of Buddha's life upto 2nd C.A.D. In the absence of normal contemporary, well-connected evidence, resort had to be made to whatever available, epigraphic, numismatic, religious literature and archaeological sources like inscriptions, coins etc., to reach the conclusions, as mentioned in this work.

Very little work by foreign and Indian Scholars has been done to trace thel historical evlution of Buddha legend. For which they have sporadically utilised Pai and Sanskrit texts, such as *Mahavastu* and *Lalitavistara.* But none of them has incorporated so thoroughly and methodically the minutest changes, witnessed in the evolution of the said legend, during the course of nearly half a millennium, i.e. right from pre-Buddha concept, to the times of Aśvaghoṣa (2nd Century A.D). The present volume tries to fill-up these gaps.

Regarding the dates assigned to the Pali and Sanskrit religious literature without entering into any controversy, I have mostly depended upon the dates assigned by Pali Text Society, London ; Harvard Oriental Series Publications and Winternitz, though the opinion of other commentators and scholars of Royal Asiatic Society and Asiatic Society, Calcutta ; Mahabodhi Societies of India and foreign countries, such as at Bombay, Bihar, Colombo, London etc. have not been ignored.

Here a word of caution ! The Buddhist literature, in Pali and Sanskrit, deals mainly with ethics and religion. However, it grew up amongst those followers of Buddha, who dwelt in the republics (Janapadas) and Kingdoms of those times. As such, we do find references, here and there, in these texts, which tell us about the ideas held by the Indian people of those times. There references are purely incidental but this very fact makes them all the more valuable, because they give us a picture, may be imperfect, but still fairly correct, as far as it goes, of the general conditions, economic, social etc., as they appeared to the composers of these texts.

The Pali literature is not earlier than 3rd to 4th C.B.C while Buddha lived in 6th—5th C.B.C. Morever, these sources do not give the well-connected life-events of the Teacher. Rather they make only sporadic references to his birth, heritage, renunciation, enlightenment and disciples. The Chinese, Tibetan, Sinhalese and Burmese scholars have also mostly depended upon Pali (and Sanskrit) works e.g. *Mahavastu, Lalitavistara* and Aśvaghoṣa's two Sanskrit Kāvyas, *Buddhacarita* and *Saundernanda.* Out of these, only the Sanskrit works of Aśvaghoṣa give us well-connected events of Buddha's life.

In Pali Vinaya and Nikāyas, the Buddha's life begins from the great renunciation with only occasional references to Tuṣita heaven, while in Sanskrit sources, it begins from his pre-birth in Tuṣita heaven and ends with his pari-nirvāṇa. Hence the Chinese, Tibetan, Burmese and Sinhalese traditional life-events of his life could not be ignored, while tapping Sanskrit sources.

The present work includes a full chapter on the 'Māra' concept, in which various aspects of 'Māra', the Temptor, the Kāmdeva personified etc. have been dealt with. The reason for this is simple fact, that this Māra concept, although it started initially with a temptor, grew into a deva-deva with great super-natural powers, by the time of Aśvaghoṣa. Aśvaghoṣa has personified 'Māra' as Kāmdeva, a metaphorical figure in the Brahmaṇic literature. Śiva is said to have burnt Kāmdeva with his third eye. In Buddhist literature, as a parallel episode, Buddha fights Māra, the Temptor. Whether this fight in Buddhacarita symbolises his own inner conflicts or the conflict with the other prevailing sects, specially the Brahmaṇic theology, is still a matter of further probe.

The story of the 'Evolution of Buddha Legend', over a period of more than half a millennium (Buddha to Kaniṣka) is a story of ups and downs. Starting with an individual (Buddha), initially it was confined to a very narrow central belt in India. But it had a popular appeal, as it not only allowed right of worship even to the poorest, and the most down-trodden, with no barriers of caste, colour etc., but also made it very simple. So, gradually the number of converts increased. But in this process, the Buddhist preachers and writers had to fight the then prevalent other religious sects, specially the Brahmaṇism. So they resorted to depict Buddha and his life-events, similar to other popular Hindu Gods. The pre-Buddha concept, Māyādevi's dream, four scenes, the Māra concepts etc., all point to that end. However in the process of deifying Buddha, his original philosophy and teachings slowly got changed, specially after the royal patronage of Aśoka, when Buddhism crossed the Indian Borders and reached Tibet and China in the North and Śri Lanka in the South. So much so, that by the time of Aśvaghoṣa (2nd C. AD), Buddhism was divided into eighteen factions. Aśvaghoṣa's *Śraddotpada Śāstra* clearly shows the change from Hinayana to Mahāyāna. This has been fully dealt with in my earlier project, "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". However, the missing links have been dealt with in this work.

I am highly thankful to the Librarians of S.R.S. and Shri Raghunath Pathśala MSS Library, Jammu ; ASI Library, Delhi ; National Museum Library, Delhi ; ICHR Library, Delhi ; University Library, Delhi ; Central Secretariat Library, Delhi ; N.C.E.R.T. Library, Delhi and International Academy of Indian Culture Library, Delhi.

My thanks are due to the Directors of the following Museums, who have supplied me rare photographs, used in this volume :—National Museum, Delhi ; the State Government Museums of Lucknow, Mathura and Chandigarh.

I appreciate and thank Dr. Lokesh Chandra, Dr. Mahesh Tiwari of Delhi University ; Bikhṣu Aryavanśo of Mandir Marg, Delhi ; Buddha Vihar and Lala Aditya Narain of National Museum, Delhi, for helping me with discussions on various controversial and complicated points, incorporated in this volume.

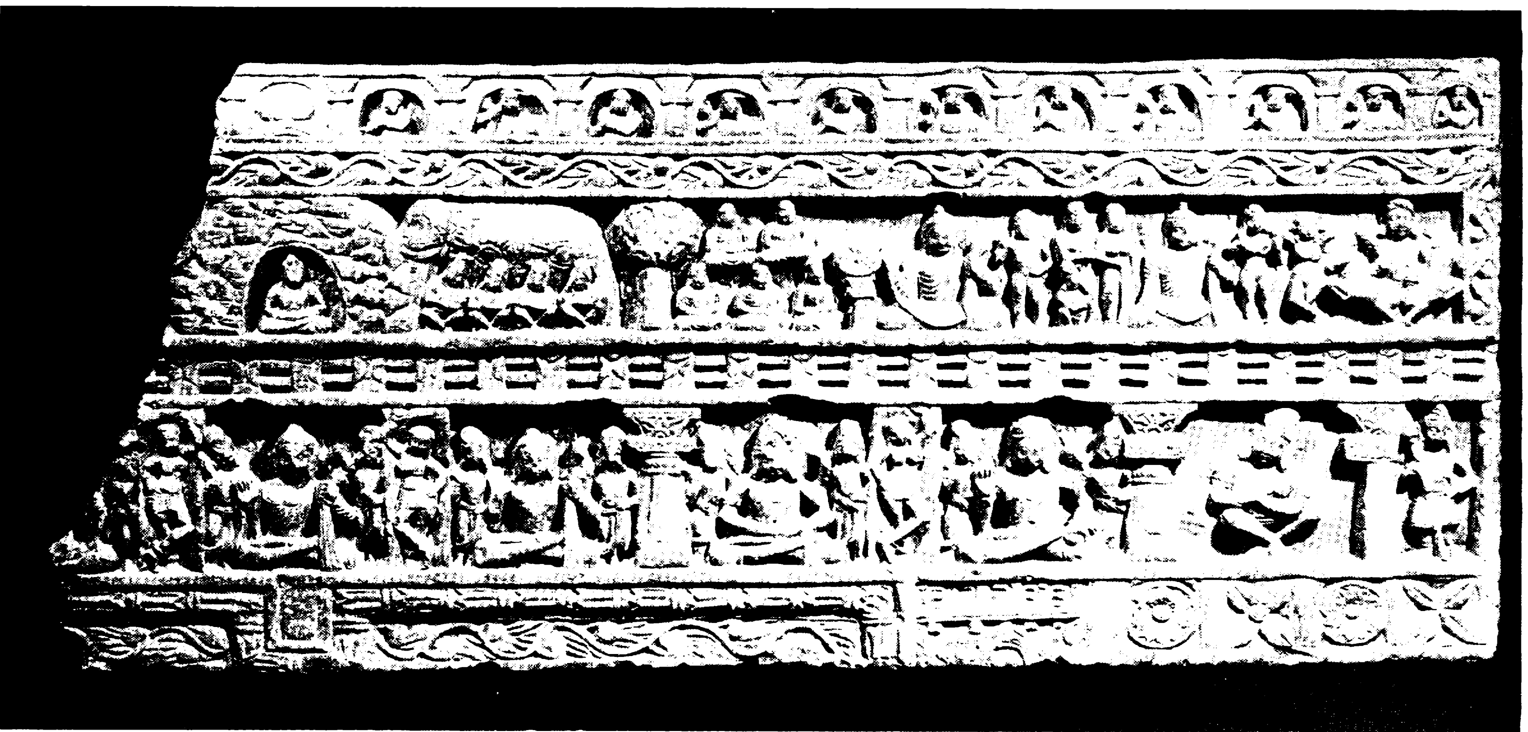
Finally, I am obliged to thank Dr. B.R. Grover, Director, I.C.H.R. (As it is an I.C.H.R. project) for all the assistance he has given to me to bring forth this volume, which suppliments 'Aśvaghoṣa and His Times'.

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ḌR. SARLA ḲHOSLĄ

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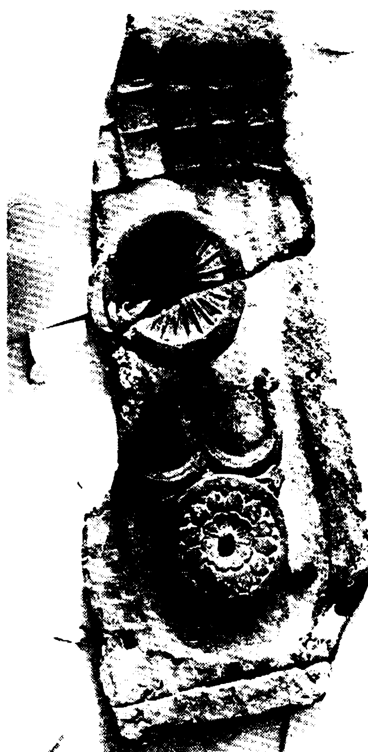


*Plate VIII Courtesy Chandigarh Museum*



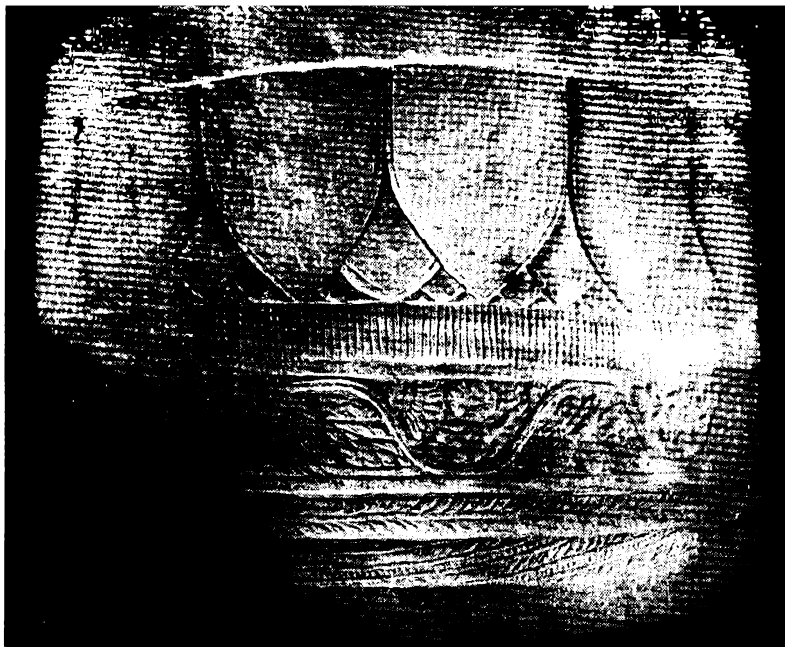
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*Courtesy. Chandigarh Museum, 543. The Host of Mara (2nd. C.A.D)*

# 1

# Life of Gautama Buddha

**Pre-Buddhas**

In Nikayas, DN (Mahāpadānasutta)[1] enumerates six-pre Buddhas[2] viz., Vipāssi, Sikki, Vessabhu, Kakusandha, Konāgamana and Kassapa. In the later works e.g., in Buddhavaṁśa, Nidānakatha and Mahavaṁśa[3] twenty four pre-Buddhas are mentioned, who preceded Gautama Buddha during the last twelve world cycles. They are Dipaṅkara, Kodañña, Maṅgala, Sumanas, Révata, Sobhita, Anomadassin, Paduma, Nārada, Padumuttara, Sumedha, Sujata, Piyadassi, Aṭṭadassi, Dhammadasi, Siddhāttha, Tissa, Pussa, Vipassi, Sikki, Vessabhu, Kakasandha, Koṇagamana and Kassapa. Buddhavaṁśa's twenty seventh chapter mentions three more Buddhas : Tanhaṅkara, Medhṅkara and Saranaṅkara, who appeared in the world before Dipaṅkara.

The life history of Vipassi in Mahāpadāna Sūtta, and of Dipaṅkara Daśabala in Nidānakatha (Tiwari, p. 28), are the legends connected with the life of Gautama Buddha in Buddhavaṁśa.[4]

1 Dialogue II, p. 5.
*Mahāpadāna Sutta* gives the detailed history of Vipāssi and particulars of each Buddha in as many pariccedas.

2 "Buddha is a generic name, an appellative, but not proper name given to one who had attained enlightenment, a superior to all other beings human and divine by his knowledge of dhamma". "Namātarā katam na pitarā katam-vimokhānkkhantikam etam buddhanaṃ bhagavantanaṃ bodhi āmūle...paññati" (*Mahāniddesa Comy, Patisambhidamagga Comy* ; *DPPN* II, p. 294, fln. 1).
*Ref. PLATE-I.*

3 *Buddhavaṁśa* (R. Morris. PTS. 1882).
*Nidānakatha* (T.S. 1992) Dure Nidāna.
*Mahavaṁśa* (Wilhelm. Geiger. PTS. 1964) ; verses 5-10.
The three Buddhas who appeared before Dipaṅkara never prophesied concerning the future Buddha, otherwise the list is the same. Henry Clarke Warren in *Buddhism in Translation*, (H.O.S. III) p. 32.

4 *Malalaśekara* (DPPN pp. 323 ff) concludes that the life of all the Bodhesattvas is the same, with a slight difference in birth, childhood, youth, marriage, renunciation, austerities and enlightenment records, For Daśabala-Infra *the pāramita legend.*

According to Burmese tradition,[5] there lived twenty-eight pre-Buddhas for "one hundred thousand worlds ago", until men were assured by Phra Dipaṅkara that he would afterwards become Buddha. At that time he was Sumedha.

*Lalitavistara* gives a list of fifty-four pre-Buddhas and narrates the life story of historical Gautama Buddha.

Mahāvastu (I. pp. 53-124) has given a long list of more than one hundred pre-Buddhas and has given a detailed account of Dipaṅkara Buddha (I. pp. 152 ff) Megha and Meghadatta[6] (I.p. 188) and Gautama Buddha.

Aśvaghoṣa, in his Kāvyas, is silent about these pre-Buddhas but refers to Kakṣivat Gautama in *Saundernanda* (I.1) who was an ancestor of Kapila Gautama Muṇi and compares his (Kapila Gautama's) perfections with that of Kaśyapa (S. I. 2).

"Cantena of Buddhist scriptures from the Chinese (p. 159) refers to six pre-Buddhas. They are found in the same order in Svayaṁbhu Purāṇa.[7]

The legend of Dipaṅkara Buddha has been translated by Beal, from the Chinese Fu-pen-hing-tsi-king (miscellaneous notices respecting the birth history of Buddha), (called Tr. of Abhiniṣkramaṇa Sutra, in his "Romantic History of Śakya Buddha."

The Chinese life of Dipaṅkara agrees mostly with Mahāvastu and not with the history of Buddha in Pali Buddhavaṁśa.[8]

Māratajjaniya Sutta (MN) refers to Kakasandha and his pupil Sanjiva. Arunavatti Sutta (in the Paritta) mentions Sikki and his two Aggasavaka Abhibhu and Sambhava.[9]

Out of all these pre-Buddhas, much importance is attached to Kakasandha, Kanagammana and Kassapa. The Chinese authorities say that the systems of only these were firmly established, while that of those who preceded them lasted but for a short time.[10]

In the commentary of Buddhavaṁśa the three immediate predecessors of Gautama Buddha are Brahmaṇas and are (seems to be) mentioned with special honour. The golden bowl in which Sujata offered alms to Gautama, descended into the lake of Nāga king, where it surmounted the bowls of the three Buddhas.[11]

This tradition of the golden-bowl reaching the abode of Kālā-nāga, striking the bowls of previous three Buddhas and surmounting them, is referred to in

5 P. Bigandet, *Gaudama*, pp. 15-22.
6 His opposite in Pali text is Sumedha. (DPPN).
7 R. Morris, Pref. *Buddhavaṁśa*, p. VI, pp. 250-55.
8 *Ibid*, p. VI.
9 *Ibid*, p. V.
10 R. Morris, *Buddhavaṁśa*, p. VII.
Three Devas in Nidānakatha proclaimed to the world the birth of a universal monarch on earth (*Tr.* R. Davids p. 144).
11 Hardy, *M.B*, p. 169.

Nidāna Katha (Tr. R. Davids 188). Aśvaghoṣa also refers to it in *Buddhacarita* (XII. 116 ff ).

Bigandet concludes, though the sacred books mention 28 pre-Buddhas, it is difficult to infer that they were all real beings. Their extraordinary longivity, their immense stature and "the myriads of centuries that are supposed to have elapsed from the times of the first to the time of Gautama are apparently conclusive proofs against the reality of their existence...the historical time begins with Gautama, while there exist historical proofs of the existence of the rival creed of Brahmaṇism, anterior to the days of the acknowledged author of Buddhism." (Gaudama fln 5 pp. 16-17).

**Pre-Buddhas in Art and Sculpture**

In the reliefs of the east gateway of Sanchi, the middle and ends of the beams (third architrave; back applied panels) show seven holy trees adorned by gods and men. They are evidently the six predecessors of Buddha and that of the Buddha :— Vipassi, Sikki, Vessabhu, Kakasandha, Konagamana, Kassapa and Gautama, which are also represented at Barahut, as the inscriptions witness.[12] Lucknow State Museum No. 8.208 displays seven Buddhas and scenes[12A] from the life of Buddha, from Mathura Sandstone 2nd C. A.D. (Ref. PLATE-1).

To conclude, the list of pre-Buddhas increases in the later literature. Set qualities and events are assigned to each Buddha, which are in co-ordination with the life of Gautama Buddha. Buddhavaṁśa, Chinese and Burmese tradition give great honour to the last three pre-Buddhas who were Brahmaṇas (Hardy M.B. p. 169). It would not be a far fetched conclusion that three great teachers (Brahmaṇas) who preceded Gautama Buddha are named as pre-Buddhas. These stories of the pre-Buddha-Teachers' lives are transfered to historical Gautama Buddha's life, in order to add lustre to his life, whom they considered as their successor. Accariyabbhuta dhamma Sutta (MN III) is silent about these pre-Buddhas, which are found in later literature with an increasing number.

**Qualities and qualifications**

(a) *The Pāramita Legend*

The attainment of pāramitas (perfections) as an essential qualification or preliminary condition of Buddhahood, which Buddha is supposed to have acquired in countless series of rebirths as Bodhisattva, is not found in four Nikayas (R. Davids, B. India, p. 177).

12 Grünwedel, *B.A.I.*, p. 74.
12 A (Refer PLATE I).

For the first time we hear of ten-pāramitas from Saviputra[13] in Buddhavaṁśa of Khuddaka Nikaya, who wanted Buddha to explain their attainment by the Teacher.

The commentary of MN (IV 170)[14] comments that Bodhisattva entered his mother's *womb* having fulfilled all the pāramitas.

The Nidānakatha (verses 126-75) speaks of ten pāramitas i.e. Dāna (charity), Śīla (morality), Naiṣkrāmya (abnegation); Prajña (wisdom), Virya (exertion), Kṣanti (patience), Satya (truth), Abhistana (resolution), Maitri (good-will) and Upekṣa (equanimity).

The last ten Jataka stories which narrate the last ten previous births of Buddha, tell how he practised ten great virtues, the indespensable qualifications for attaining the exalted position or dignity of Buddha.

In Mahavaṁśa (verses 1-11)[15] Sambhuddha, prophesied to be future Buddha, fulfills the perfections as preparation to the attainment of Buddhahood.

In fact Pali tradition first tells of eight conditions[16] for making a wish succeed and then speaks of ten perfections.

Burmese tradition (Bigandet, p. 20) also tells of ten perfections as essential qualities of Buddhahood.

Mahāyāna tradition tells of six pāramitas. Arya Asanga also divides them in six in his Māhāyāna Sutralṁkāra :[17] Dāna, Śīla, kṣanti, Dhyāna, Prajña and Virya. Daśabhumika Sutra is the first to tell us about ten pāramitas. The four new additions in the said Sutra are Upayakauśalya (skilfulness in expedients), Pranidhana (vow or resolution), Bala (attainment of certain powers) and Jñana (knowledge).[18]

13 दानं शीलं च नेक्खमं पञ्ञाविरियं च कीदिसं ।
खन्ति सच्चघनधिट्ठानं,मेत्तपेक्खा च कीदिसा ।।
दस पारमी तया धीर कीदिसी लोकनायक ।
कथं उपपारमी पुण्णा परमत्थपारमी कथं ।।

14 *MN* III fin. I p. 165.

15 *Mahavaṁśa* (B.C. Law) p. I.

16 H.C. Warren, *B in Tr.* (HOS III) pp. 32-3 ... *J* 44 (vasantara J),
"A human being made of sex who saintship gains, a teacher meets,
As harmit lives, and virtue loves,
Nor lack resolve, nor fiery zeal,
Can by these eight conditions joined,
Make his most earnest wish succeed."

These eight conditions were united in Sumedha, when he wished to search the perfections which make a Buddha (Nidānakatha, Dr. Tiwari, p. 37).
*Asanga, Sutralaṁkāra* pp. 98-100.

17 समस्त महायान संग्रह हाधिकारात् षट् पारमिता.

18 Dr. Tiwari, in *Intro. Nidānakatha* pp. 48-67 has discussed pāramitas in detail and is of the opinion that the ten pāramitas are only the extended explanation of six.

In Sanskrit, the six pāramitas are found in Mahavastu (III, p. 226), LV. (p. 340) and Aṣtasahrika Prajña Pāramita (p. 194), and the ten of the Mahāyāna in Sutralaṁkāra, Daśabhumikasutta, Bodhisattvabhumi and Samadhiraja Sutra.[19]

Contrary to the popular opinion that these ten pāramitas (perfections) are necessary qualifications for Buddhahood, these are not found in four Nikayas, but only in later literature (Buddhavaṁśa, camy of MN, Nidānakatha and Jatakas). They are a later interpolation. Dr Mahesh Tiwari believes that Śila, Śmādhi and Prajña, which are much talked about as the essential requisites in Tripitaka, if scruitinised, incorporate the eight fold path and ten pāramitas. These ten pāramitas are only the later explanation of the three above referred[20] qualities, mentioned in Tripitaka.

The importance of pāramitas in the life of Buddha is very great. While he was sitting under the Bo-tree just before enlightenment, Māra attacked him from the back, the greatman, looking around three sides, finding no 'deva' for his help, thought of depending upon the ten perfections. It was with the armour of these perfections that he was able to thewart the attack of Māra from air (with raging winds) and water (i.e., heavy rain which overturned even the trees) ; rocks ; deadly weapons, storm of charcoal, ambers, sand, mud and deep darkness (Nidānakatha, R. Davids), pp. 191-94).

**Decision to Descend from Heaven**

According to Achariyabhutta-dhamma Sutta (MN III), Buddha, before his birth on earth, lived amongst gods in Tuṣita heaven[21] till his life span ended there. And deceasing from the Tuṣita group, mindful and clearly conscious, entered his mother's womb.

This simple narration of M.N. finds elaboration in Kuddaka Nikaya (Buddhavaṁśa). It (Buddhavaṁśa) tells us of 24 pre-Buddhas, assigning a chapter to each. Here the principal events of the life of Gautama are enacted in the life of each one of the former Buddhas. The story is told by Buddha himself.

In the second part of Buddhavaṁśa, Dipaṅkara fore-tells Sumedha (a devoted Brahmaṇa) to be the future Gautama Buddha at the end of asankheyyas and hundred thousand cycles hence. He, in that life, determines to attain ten perfections, in order to fulfill the preliminary conditions of Buddhahood. Chariyapitata (the last book of of Khuddakamkaya) speaks of the purpose of perfections (Winternitz, H.I.L. II, p. 162).

19 N. Dutt, *Popular Buddhism* p. 262 ff vide IHQ XXI 1945.
20 *Nidānakatha* (Dr. Tiwari, p. 50 ff).
Śila includes : Satya, Deva, Sīla and Kṣanti pāramitas.
Smādhi includes : Virya, Maitri, Upekṣa and Adheṣṭana pāramitas.
Prajña includes : Prajña and Naeṣkramya pāramitas.
21 *Ref. PLATE-II.*

The first section of Nidānakatha (mainly a comy of Buddhavaṁśa and Cariyāpitaka)[22] includes the narration of Sumedha. He pays homage to Dipaṅkara, the then Buddha and resolves to attain ten perfections,[23] the essential qualifications to attain Buddhahood. In the end, in Vasantara Jataka, he attains the summit of perfection and is born in Tuṣita heaven of gods. In the second section of Nidānakatha, the Tuṣita gods[24] implore him to take birth on earth for the salvation of the world and after due consideration, he decides to do so.

This tells the birth of Buddha before taking rebirth on earth amongst the devas or gods in Tuṣita heaven, and his decision, at the request of the gods, to take birth for the salvation of the world, which is a later development of Buddha cult.

Lalitavistara (II ch) describes the decision of Bodhisattva to take birth on earth from Tuṣita heaven in a miraculous way "...... Amid thousand of 84000 drums, he is *invited* to commence his work of salvation." After long consultations, he takes the decision and accepts the invitation to do so. Dipaṅkara Buddha forecasts his Buddhaship in future birth.[25]

In Mahavastu (JJ Jones I, pp. 1-3) a little different story is presented. Here, Boddhisattva, himself knowing the adverse conditions prevailing in the world of mortals, considers the matter of taking birth on earth and takes a decision to do so.

Aśvaghoṣa has maintained the tradition of Buddha's descent from Tuṣita heaven in *S*. II 48. He has not deviated from the tradition and has maintained it. But he has used restraint in his presentation, as compared with miraculous presentation in LV and Mahavastu.

The Tibetan Sources record the descent of Bodhisatta from Tuṣita heaven in a little different way. Here he is chosen by Kasyapa for the Viceregency in Tuṣita and to be an instructor of gods, as he was descending to become a Buddha. He was also blessed by the latter Kaśyapa with his own diadem. He remained in Tuṣita for a long time. At a certain time, when gods were exhibiting all sorts of musical entertainments out of respect for him, the Devas of all the corners of the world, requested him to endeavour to become a Buddha. He acceeded to their request (Asit Res. XX, pp. 286-7).

In Dulva (III. f 450-452) Māyā bore no son to Śuddhodana. Future Buddha was in heaven at that time. He, knowing that the time has come to take rebirth,

22 Winternitz *HIL II* p. 187.

23 Infra. the pāramita legend.

24 The names in the text are four Mahārajas, Sakka, Suyāma, Santuṣita, Pārammitta-Vaṣavatii and the Mahābhrahma. They are the governors in the different worlds (Chakkavalas) of the Buddhist Cosmogony. (Avidure Nidāna, in *N.K. Tr.* R. Davids p. 1450).

25 दीपंकरेण वद व्यकृतु शुद्धसत्वो, बुद्धी भविष्यसि हि त्वं नर्सिहर्सिह ।
*LV*. (P.L. Vaidya) XXVI. 27. p. 302.

makes the five preliminary examination and decides about his mother, family, country, time and race. Then he enters his mother's womb in the appearance of an elephant (Rockhill, Buddha, p. 15).

In Burmese tradition (Bigandet, I, p. 9) Dipaṅkara prophesied that Sumedha would be future Buddha. He practised ten perfections and in previous life migrated to Tuṣita, the fourth abode of Nats. Suddenly a rumour was heard that he would soon make appearance in the world (Ibid, pp. 16-19).

The gods of Tuṣita heaven one day collected and requested him to take birth for the salvation of suffering humanity, as the right time had come. Unwilling to answer positively, he demanded time to examine or enquire the circumstances, always required for the coming of a Buddha in the world (Bigandet, I, pp. 19-22). Then examined time, continent, place, race, caste and informed the Devas his decision to take birth on earth. (This description agrees with *LV*).

Nidānakatha, LV and Mahavastu all give a connected account of Buddha's life. All tell that, in previous birth, having made a resolve under Dipaṅkara Buddha, he decides to take birth on earth, for the salvation of suffering humanity.

From these records it is clear that Buddha is a being of Tuṣita heaven and is one of the gods residing there. This appears merely to glorify and to honour their hero, whom they considered not less than any Hindu mythological god and as an incarnation of god.

**Selection of time, country, family, caste and parents**

When final decision of Bodhisattva's birth is taken it becomes obligatory to decide about suitable time, continent, country, family, caste, clan, parents or mother and her qualifications or qualities.

The legend of Buddha's conception and birth, in Pali, is found in Acchariyabbutadhamma Sutta (MN III. 123), Mahāpadana Sutta (DN II. 14 ff), Nidānasutta and Buddhavaṁśa. The Sanskrit sources Lalitavistara (V) *Mahavastu* (II. p. 8 ff), Aśvaghoṣa's works : *Buddhacarita* and *Saundermanda*, the Tibetan sources : Rockhill's Life of Buddha derived from *Bkah-Hgyur* and *Bstan-Hgyur* (p. 15 ff) ; the Chinese texts enumerated by S. Beal in SBE XIX (p. XVII ff) ; and Burmese tradition : Bigandet's Life of Gautama ; all maintain and develop the same story and also indicate the changes introduced in the legend in the passage of time.

Mahāpadana Sutta (DN II. 14 and 15) sets general characteristics for the conception and birth of Bodhisattva, which in later literature, are attributed and elaborated, when incorporated in Śākya Buddha's life.

In Nidānakatha,[26] Buddhavaṁśa, Lalitavistara (ch. III) Mahavastu (II. pp. 1-3),

26 *Nidānakatha* (R. Davids) pp. 146-49.

Tibetan and Burmese tradition[27] (Bigandet, pp. 25-28), when a decision is taken about the rebirth of a new Buddha, the Bodhisattva himself makes five investigations of time, continent, country, family and parents (with special reference to the mother).

He selects Jamubudvipa (India), one of the four great islands of the world, with mount Meru in the middle, to be his continent ; Majjhimadeśa 'The middle district', the country where universal monarchs are born and Kapilvastu, the place of his birth.

As Kṣatriya, the warrior class were the honoured people of the time, he selects Śuddhodana, a Kṣatriya of Śākyakula (family) (p. 148) and sets a rule that Buddhas are not to be born in a Vaiśya or Śudra caste, but only in a Brahmaṇa or Kṣatriya caste, whichever is then held in highest reputation.

In L.V.,[28] in addition to this rule, the advantages and defects of a large number of royal facilities are weighed in the balance, before Bodhisattva decides to be reborn in the house of king Śuddhodana.

In Mahavastu (II, p. 1), in order to become a popular teacher, one is always to be born in the highest caste of the time, Brahmaṇas or Kṣatriyas.

Without deviating from tradition, Aśvaghoṣa,[29] has given a little veiled description : The heavenly inhabitants, in order to know the 'Righteousness' in practice, roamed around the world and found the king Śuddhodana upto the mark. Then the decision was taken that Bodhisattva should descend from Tuṣita heaven to take birth in the family of this king.

When the decision about the time, country, place, caste and family was taken, then it was to be decided as to how and in what shape he was to descend from Tuṣita heaven to take conception.

27 When the gods in heaven, after long consultation, failed to reach a decision, they approached Bodhisattva who himself made the selection of time, country, caste and parents (*Asiat. Res.* XX pp. 286 ff).

28 न बोधिसत्त्वा हीनकुलेषूपयद्यन्ते
अद्य तर्हि कुलद्वये एवोपपद्यन्तै ब्राह्मणकुले क्षत्रियकुले च ।
*LV* Leffmann p. 20.

29 विचेरुर्दिषि लोकस्य धर्मचर्यादिदृक्षव:
(S. II. 46).
तद्दृशुसतं बिशेषेण धर्मात्मानं निरधिप
(*Ibid.* 47).
देवेभ्यस्तुषितेभ्वोऽथ बोधिसत्त्व: क्षिति व्रजन् ।
उपपति प्राणिदधे कुले तस्य महीपत्ते: ।।
(*Ibid.* 48).
The story of the descent is referred in *DN II.* 12-13 (Dialogue pp. 8-10).

Nidānakatha (Avidure Nidāna pp. 150-4), which records the Pali tradition and connected life of Buddha, tells : On the last day of Aśāḍa (June-July) on the moon festival day, Māyādevi dreams that Bodhisattva who was roaming on the Himalayas in the shape of a white elephant (e.g. J 514), decends from the north, on the silver mountain and enters her womb, from the right side. Thus on Lunar Uttarasalhhe[30] she receives a new conception.

In Lalitavistara V (P L Vaidya, pp. 28 ff), after appointing Maitreya as his substitute in Tuṣita, Boddhisatta convened a meeting of the devas and consulted them as to in which form he should enter his mother's womb. (Brahma, Gandharva, Kinnara, Maheshwara, Chandra, Surya, Garuḍa etc). After a long discussion, the decision was taken that he should enter the new life in the shape of a *six-tusked* elephant. Here (L.V. VI, P. 43) the conception takes place at full-moon day of Vaiṣakha (April-May), moon standing in Pusya. Then the story follows as to the dreams of Maya devi and the interpretation, the wish of the queen to go to her parents and the birth of future Buddha at Lumbini.[31]

This legend of 'white-elephant' is a little bit different, in L.V.[32] It is described as real "Gajavaru dṛdhasandhi vajrakalpassurūpah udari mama praviṣatasya".

Mahavastu (II. p. 8) repeats the Pali legend of Bodhisattva's conception entering her body in the form of a noble elephant, light of steps, flawless of limbs, gleaming like snow-white silver with six tusks, a gracefully waving trunk and crimson head. Here many more super-natural-elements and characteristics are added, though the rule that the mothers of Bodhisattvas delivered, when the tenth month is completed (Mhv II. p. 16) is also referred. It preserves the legend of Bodhisattvas conception on full-moon day but the month is Pauṣa (Dec-Jan) (Ibid, p. 8). Here (Mhv II 18, p. 16) Māyādevi is invited by her father, the Śākyan Subhuti with the message, "Let the queen come hither, she shall be delivered here". She gave birth to Bodhisattva, according to the general rule that births of supreme-men, take place while standing from their right side (Ibid, 20, p. 18). Aśvaghoṣa, however, has used restraint, over his expressions. In a very polished Kāvya style and in a few words only he says, "before conceiving, the queen saw in her dream a six-tusked white god-like elephant,

30 The Indian Lunar Zodiac is divided into 27 or 28 constellations. The Buddhists preserves the whole of it in Nidessa I. 382. Their list is given in *L.V.* 502-6 ; *Divya.* 639 ff, *Maharyutpatti* 162 c.f. Sun, moon and stars (Buddhist) in ERE (E.J. Thomas, *L of B*, ftn. II p. 32).

31 अचिर चिरचिरेणषा जातउद्धानबुद्धि ।
यदि च यव न ऐषो नैव दोषो न मोह्:
क्षिप्रमहु व्रजेया क्रीड़उघानभूमिम् ।।
*L.V.* (P L Vaidya), p. 58.

32 गजवरु ह्दसंधिर्वज्र कल्प: सरुप:
उदरि मम प्रविष्टश्तस्य हेतु श्रृणुष्व ।।6।।
*Ibid.* p. 44.

entering her body, and yet she felt no pain. (B I. 4, S. II. 50). This impression agrees with *LV.* (ch V. pp. 28. & 44).

The justification of 'Elephant Legend' is traced in Mhv II (p. 12) where Brahma says : A woman who dreams of a white elephant entering her womb will give birth to a being as select as elephant (gajjasattva). He will be a Buddha. The Chinese annals tell us that the 'elephant' indicates 'power and wisdom'.[33]

Tibetan tradition, preserving the legend of Māyādevi's dream of six-tusked elephant entering her body, however, adds three more points : viz.

(1) She moves in the space above.

(2) She ascends a great rocky mountain, and

(3) a great multitude bow down to her (Rockhill Buddha, p. 15).

The exact date of Buddha's birth is 15th day of the 4th month of the wood-rat year as per the Tibetan tradition. (Asiat. Res. XX., p. 288).

The Burmese tradition attaches more importance to Māyādevi and the festival of constellation of outurāthan (July-Aug.). In addition to this, it introduces some alterations in the dream, "on the east of the palace, in the side of the mount, was a splended cave. Within the cave a bed, similar to that of Nats, was prepared. The princess was led to that place and sat on the bed......opposite this mount......there rose another mount......where Bodhesattva, under the shape of a young white elephant, was roaming...in various directions. His voice, occasionally resounding through the air could be heard distinctly by the inmates of the grotto and indicated his approach.

He soon entered the caves, turned three times round the couch, whereupon sat the princess—opened her right side-and appeared to conceal himself in her womb" etc. (Bigandet, L.B., pp 28-29).

The development of the white elephant legend, into six tusked elephant, may be to show that he (Boddhisatta) was not less than six-faced son of Bhava. This has been referred to by Aśvaghoṣa (B I. 88).

Aśvaghoṣa's account differs from the old legend in a few more points. Māyādevi, here (B I. 6), longs for the lonely forest, as suited to trance. She neither desires to see her parents nor gets an invitation from her father to deliver the child in his house. She was delivered of a son from her side, when Puṣya became proptious (*B* I. 9). Though the constellation is mentioned, the month is missing. The direction of the side, as referred to in previous literature as the Right side, and the support of Sal tree,[34] are also not mentioned.

Similarly, Soṇaṇḍanda Sutta (DN I. 113, 118) does not tell us anything abnormal

33 Beal, R. *Legend*, p. 36 ftn. 2.
34 *AN*. II. 130-131.

about Bodhisattva's birth. It only records that from his mother as well as father's side, he was well born. He belonged to the unbroken Kṣatriya family, which was very rich.

Again in Acchariyabbutadhamma Sutta (MN. 123), Buddha, reciting the event of his conception and birth to Ananda, simply says"......decending from the Tuṣita group, mindful and clearly conscious, he entered his mother's womb. She delivered[35] him, after ten months, while standing". It does not record the elephant legend, what to say of six-tusked white elephant holding a white lotus in its silvery tusks and entering Māyādevi's womb, though in dream, which clearly shows that it is a later legend. Rhys Davids holds that Bodhisattva, entering Māyādevi's womb, in the shape of an elephant, is merely a figure of speech (DN II fln. p. 116).

However, it may be pointed out that a dream is a dream and this story is merely a poetic expression of a legend.[36] As such, the dream, that a white elephant had entered in Māyā's womb, seem to be only an abstract idea, which has been repeated again and again and given weight, out of fancy and super-human touch in it. It only indicates that 'powerful and dominating' would be the child, as the seed (elephant) indicates.

Even, historically viewed, the oldest scriptural records do not talk of anything abnormal about Buddha's birth or conception. However, they do record of his being well-born, both of his mother and father's side (DN I. 113, 115). It is only in later legends that he is shown as not born as an ordinary human being, but descending from Tuṣita heaven, with his own sweet will, where no special importance is attached to the father (though Śuddhodana is recorded as his father).

**Mother's Qualities and Qualifications**

In Acchariyabbhutadhamma sutta and Digha Nikaya,[37] set qualities and qualifications are assigned to the mother of Boddhisattva : "She is virtuous through her own nature, averse from taking life, averse from taking what is not given, averse from unchastity, averse from lying, averse from indulgence in strong drinks, in pleasures of sense......living in enjoyment yielded by the five senses......is unafflicted in body (when conceives) and she sees the Bodhisattva complete in the endowment of all his organs and his limbs."

Theragatha (v. 162) also confirms that after due considerations, the decision was taken by Bodisattva to take birth in the family of Gautama and in the womb of Māyādevi.

35 cf. *DN*. 14 : 1, 16-30 ; AN II. 130.
36 न हि एतत् सूत्रम् न विनयाह नाभिधर्मं, काव्यम् एतत् ॥
*Abhidh K*. III. 13.
37 *MN*, III. 121 ff (p. 166 ff).
Dialogue II pp. 9-10.

The alone tradition of set qualifications in Buddha's mother is maintained in Nidānakatha (Avidure Nidāna p. 148) and Mahavastu (II. pp. 1-3).

In LV. the parents are omitted from investigation but sixty four qualities of the family and thirty-two of the mother are described, which make the gods identify her. Here Māyādevi is selected to be Bodhisattva's mother. In addition to many other qualites of head and heart, she had the strength of ten thousand elephants combined in her and she alone was fit to bear the future Buddha.[38]

Aśvaghoṣa,[39] who is always concise, has maintained the tradition in an impressive poetical style. He narrates the decision of Bodhisattva to take birth in the family of Śuddhodana and Māyādevi. Śuddhodana was unconquerable Śākaya of the race of Ihṣvāku, of pure conduct and loved by people. Māyādevi was beautiful and chaste (*B I.* 2) and hence fit to be his mother.

**Mother's Life**

DN II. 14.22, MN. 123 (Acchariyabbhutadhamma Sutta) and Tibetan tradition (Asiat Res XX p 289) have set a rule that Bodhisattava's mother dies seven days after his birth and is reborn in heaven of delight (Tuṣita heaven).

Nidānakatha, in Avidure Nidāna (Tr. Davids p. 152), tells the reason : "The womb in which a future Buddha has dwelt like a sacred relic shrine, can never be occupied by another. . . .the mother of Bodhisattva died after seven days and was reborn in the city of bliss".

In Mahavastu (I. 99, II 3), as a rule, Bodhisattva's mother must die seven days after his birth, for "she who bears a peerless, like me, should not again indulge in love".

Aśvaghoṣa[40] makes it more psychological and says "when queen Māyādevi saw the vast power of her son, like that of a divine seer, she was unable to bear the joy it caused her. Then she went to heaven, to dwell there".

38 यस्या सामर्थं धारितुं नरोत्तमः
अन्यत्त देव्यति, गुणान्वतायाः ।
दशनाग, सहस्त्रं बलं हियस्या
जम्बुध्वजेऽन्या न हिसास्ति नारि . . , :
*L.V.* III. 19.
39 *B*. I. 1.
40 दृष्ट्वा विशालं तनयप्रभावम् ।
जातं प्रहर्षं न शशाक सोढुं तदो निवासाय दिवं जगाम ॥
*B*. II. 17, 18.

Burmese tradition's translator observes "the womb that has been consecrated and sanctified by the presence of a child, so exalted in dignity, can never become, afterwards, the hidden abode of less dignified beings". (Bigandet, fln 16, p. 27).

Thus Pali as well Sanskrit and other traditions agree that Buddha's mother had only one child and that was he and she died seven days after his birth.

**Conception and birth miracles**

Bodhisattva's conception and birth, in Nalaka-Sutta, (Sn) is narrated in very simple words ; that a Bodhisattva was born in the town of Śākyas, in the country of Lumbini, and in the family of Śuddhodana. However, it was wrapped up in miracles, in the later Buddhist literature. Here are a few examples :—

**Glorious Radiance or Light Radiating Body**

In Acchariyabbhuta-dhamma Sutta[41], when Bodhisattva, descending from Tuṣita, enters his mother's womb, there appears "an unlimited and glorious radiance, surpassing even the majesty of devas". This light was so powerful, that the darkest regions, which even the Sun and moon failed to light, were lighted, and beings recognised each other in its radiance. This made the ten thousand world systems tremble.

The same thing happened when Bodhisattva was taking birth (123, p. 169).

Nidānakatha (R Davids. Avidure Nidāna, pp. 151), which records Pali tradition, maintains this legend, with slight changes. At the time of conception, there are seen good omens in ten thousand world systems and immeasurable lights, when in the womb, "the mother could see Bodhisattva within her, as plainly as one could see the thread passing through a transparent gem".

There was earthquake at the conception of such an exceptional child or Bodhisattva. This simple description did not please the later writers, who added many more super-human or Lokattara element in it.

In *L.V.* (II-VI chs), when Māyādevi conceives, the gods create a jewelled palace in her womb. This is to protect Bodhisattva from defilement of the womb for ten months. In this palace, he is provided with a beautiful soft seat. Here his body radiates in glorious beauty and from the body of the mother the light shines for miles. The sick come to her and are cured of their sufferings, as soon as she touches their heads. She saw the Bodhisattva in her womb, as one sees one's own face in clear mirror.[42] He had the glore of gold when in womb.[43]

41 *MN* III. 120 (p. 160).

42 यदा च मायादेवी स्वं दक्षिणं पार्श्वं प्रत्यवेक्षते स्म, तदा पश्यति स्व बोधिसत्त्वं कुक्षिगतं तद्यथापि नाम सुपरिशुद्ध आदर्शमण्डले मुख मण्डलं दृष्यते ।
(*LV*. p. 53).

43 सुवर्ण वर्ण आभ.

Mahavastu (I. 213 p. 169); 219 (p. 174); 220 (p. 175); II 16 (p. 15); 17 (p. 16) throws more light on this new trend. Here (I. 213) (p. 169), when Bodhisattva is in womb, he is able to see his mother and the mother in her turn, can see the Bodhisattva like a body of pure gold. "It is as though a jewel of beryl were placed in its crystal casket. Just so does his mother see the Bodhisattva, like a body of gold illuminating her womb". The side of the mother was shining like gold (Mhv. I 219 (p. 174) "Oh, 'good is the inimitable light of the leader, who is strong through his merit. It outshines the worlds of men and devas. Such is the clear-toned talks that goes on there".

When he was born, "The lights of men were put out because the earth was bathed in radiance as soon as Sugata the torch bearer of men and devas was born" (Mhv. I 222 (175). The cities and towns, several thousands of men, gleamed bright and clear like heaps of diverse precious stones". (Mhv. I, 150 (pp. 118-9).

In Nidānakatha as soon as Bodhisattva enters the womb the quarters are enlightened with glorious lights. In LV & Mhv (I 210 p. 166) the young Bodhisattva illumines the womb and the light from mother's body radiates for miles. He enters the womb, already wrapped up in golden sheeth, while in LV & Mhv, a 'jewelled tabernackle', occupying Māyā devi's womb is created before hand.

The Tibetan tradition (Asiat. Res XX p. 288) records several miracles at the birth of Buddha. One of them is the same that the whole world was illumined with great light or brightness at his birth.

The tradition of having illuminating body, after birth, is maintained by Aśvaghoṣa. He says, the child (Buddha), when born, had lustre and streadfastness of the young Sun (B.I.12). He illumined all the quarters of the space with the radiance of his limbs (B.I. 13). Not only this, but when he was a grown up man, he had an illuminating form, surpassing that of mankind.[44]

Thus beginning from Sutta Nipats 286, where child Bodhisattva is described to be of beautiful appearance, like shining gold; sage Asita sees him 'shining like fire' and bright like 'the bull of stars' (Sn 687) and having an illuminating figure, the later literature is wrapped up in all fanciful discription, right from his conception.

**Birth**

In Acchariyabbhutadhamma Sutta (MN III, p. 168), the future Buddha is described to have come out from his mother's womb, quite stainless, undefiled by water, mucus, blood or any impurity. He is so pure that he is likened to a jewel, placed in Banaras silk, which is not stained.

Nidānakatha (R Davids. 154) records this Pali tradition with a few more elaborations : "Other beings, when they leave their mother's womb, leave it smeared with

44 वपुश्चदीप्तं

offensive and impure matter. Not so with a Bodhisattva. The future Buddha left his mother's womb like a preacher descending from a pulpet or a man from a ladder, erect, stretching out his hands and feet, unsoiled by any impurities, from contact with his mother's womb". It also compares him with a gem placed in fine muslin (and not silk) of Benaras.

Thus, beginning from Sutta Nipata (286) : where the child is described like shining gold, beaming in glory and with beautiful appearance ; we have the sage Asita happy (687) seeing the child-prince, "shining like the burning Sun, in the autumn sky free from clouds—". Finally Aśvaghoṣa also retains the legend of the child having an illuminating figure.

In Sutta Nipata and Buddhacarita, such a bright figure is described only after the birth, but in LV and Mhv. which add many miracles to his life-story, even when in womb, he illumines the quarters of the world.

This story of birth, without defilement and its cause, is explained in *Mahavastu*[45] Tathāgatas are born with a body that is made of mind "Manòmāyèn Rūpèna and thus his mother's body is not rent nor there is any pain". "The birth is like an exquisite lotus, that is born in the mind of pools".

"...immediately after the Sugata was born, his mother was without any hurt or scar..." (Mhv. I. 221 p. 176).

In LV (ch VII)[46] Bodhisattva was born free from the defilements of birth. The birth was attended by many miracles. He was born from the right side, which was uninjured.

The above trend continued even later on. Aśvaghoṣa also has referred to it. The future Buddha was born without his mother suffering pain or illness. The birth is described as decendence from sky or supernatural, as he was born free from the ordinary defilements of birth.[47] It was attended by many miracles (B II. 63).

In LV and Mhv I. 217 p. 173 Bodhisattva is born from the right side of his mother without causing her pain or injury. In Buddhacarita (I. 9) he is born from the side and the side direction is omitted.

Bodhisattva's birth from the right side, without causing any injury, is rather an unusual and unnatural delivery. May be that it elludes to the well developed art of surgery, and he was born with its aid.

45 Mhv. II, pp. 18-21.
46 *LV.* (P. L Pandey) p. 61.
47 *B I.* 9, 10, 11. In verse 10 the poet has referred to the legendary births of Aurva from the thigh, of Prithu from the hand of Mandhātṛ, the peer of Indra from the head, of Kaṣīvat from the armpit.

## Conception and Birth in Sculpture

The incarnation and birth scene has been occasionally represented in Buddhist sculptures. Bharhut pl. XVII. (Cunningham) represents the descent of Bodhisattva from heaven. The same scene is found in Sanchi. Here the amblematic representation is the celestial ladder, with footprints above and below, for the descent of Bodhisattva from Tuṣita heaven. "From this comes the 'idea' that the descending elephant, besides the sleeping Māyā, is a dream". Bodhisattva, descending on the ladder, is also found in Gandhāra sculptures. The modern picture from Kamboja in the Berlin museum, pertains to this subject (Grünwedel, B.A.I. fln I, p. 67).

The rocks of Kalsi and Dauli, which contain the edicts of king Aśoka, bear the inscription (Gajātma) the best elephant. Barhut (2nd C. BC) and "Sanchi (1st C. BC) first gateway with north pillar, south face second panel represent, "Being entreated by the gods of the Tuṣita heaven, Bodhisattva decended to the earth in the form of a white elephant, while Māyā, queen of Śuddhodana, the Śākya chief of Kapilvastu, saw in a dream as entering her body".[48]

## Date, Month and Year of Birth

The exact date, month and year of Buddha's conception is controversial in texts :

According to Nidānakatha, as mentioned above, his conception took place in the full moon day of Uttarāṣāḍha, the second of the two lunar constellations from which the month Aṣāḍha (June-July) takes the name.[49] This corresponds to the traditional date of his birth on the full moon day of Vaiṣākha (April-May). In L.V. this is the date of conception.

In another opinion (S. Beal, *R Legend of Śākya* B[50]) Bodhisattva left Tuṣita heaven on a pleasant day in the opening of the month of spring.

In Buddhacarita (I.9) a sòn was born to the queen as soon as Puṣya became propitions. The Chinese tradition gives the precise date "the eighth day of the fourth month."[51]

48 Debla Mitra Sanchi (A.S. I.) 1973, p. 31.
*The way of Buddha*, Section II plate 14 represents Barhut scene of conception.
Plate 15 represents Sanchi scene of the descent of white elephant. Aśoka on RE XIII at Girnar causes to write 'Scto hasti Sarvaloka-Subhākaranāma. "The white elephant is the harbinger of peace throughout the world."

49 "This is also the traditional date of his enlightenment and his death. Although the year was probably at this time solar, the months were lunar, and intercalation was necessary. In 1922 the feast of Wesak (Vaiśākha) in Ceylon was at full moon on May ten," E.J. Thomas *Buddha*, p. 34.

50 p. 35.

51 Johnston, ftn. *B.I.* verse 9.
Japanese celebrate the birth of Buddha on 8th April (E. Jennings. The *V.B.R.* fln I p. 7)

The Ceylonese Chronicles' give the traditional date of Buddha's birth in 623 B.C.[52]

Much historical research has been done on the year of Gautama's birth and death dates. The generally accepted dates (uptill today, 20th C) are : that he was born in 563 BC and died in 483 BC.[53]

**First Bath**

The legend of future Buddha's first bath, as soon as he is born, is found in Pali as well as Sanskrit tradition, with little variations.

In DN (II, 15.28) two streams of hot and cold water poured from the sky to give him first bath. In Acchariyabbhutadhamma Sutta (MN. 123)[54] and Nidānakatha (R. Davids p. 154) the two streams of hot and cold water appear from the sky to give bath to him and his mother.

Mahavastu (I.222 (p. 177); II pp. 20-21) and LV. preserve the legend, but the expressions are slightly different. In both only Sugata is bathed. In Mahavastu "two pitchers of water appear in the sky one of them is fragrant and pleasantly warm, agreeable and beneficial to men, the other being healthful invigorating and icy cold, with which they bathed the golden body of Sugata."[55] In L.V. (pp 61-2). Even more lustre is added to the legend, where two Naga kings stand half-way between the sky and bathe Bodhisattva with hot and cold water.[56]

The legend has been maintained by Aśvaghoṣa also (B.I. 16) but in essence only. Hot and cold water poured from the sky, fell upon his head and refreshed his body. Here again only Bodhisattva is bathed in the two streams of water, and not his mother.

52 Cunningham *Bhilsa Topes*, p. 13.

53 *H.O.S.* vol. 28 p. I.
eg. *Mahavaṁsa*, Intro. p. 16.
Camb. *H.I.* p. 278.

54 In D.*N*. A. 438 = *M.N.A*. IV 184 as these streams of water were not needed to wash away any defilements, the warm one was for playing and the cool one for drinking (*MN* III ftn. 2 p. 168)

The extraordinary bath is one of the signs (sign No. 13) of Buddha's birth. Rahulji, DN (H. Lucknow Ed. 1979, p. 99) and Rule 28 in DN. 15. In Nidānakatha 112 (बोधिसत्तस्म च बोधिसत्तमातुया च सत्कारत्थं आकासतो द्वे उदकधारा) these two streams of water were as if to respect Bodhisattva and his mother, as he was born free from birth defilements (MN. V.),

55 *MA* IV-184 = DA II 438 as these two streams were not needed to wash away the defilements, the warm one was for playing and the cold one was for drinking (*MN* III. 123 Sutta, ftn. 2 p. 168).

56 नन्दोपन्दो च नागराजानौ गगनतलेऽर्धं कायौ स्थित्वा शीतोष्णे द्वे
वारिधारेऽभिनिर्भित्वा बोधिसत्त्वं स्नापयतः स्य ।
(*L.V.* P.L. Vaidya pp. 61-2).

In Tibetan tradition, as it happens at the birth of every Buddha, two streams : one of cold and the other of hot water washed the infant at the spot where he was born. There appeared another spring of water which bathed his mother (Rockhill, Buddha p. 16).

In Burmese tradition, "there came down from the sky, upon both (mother and the child), by way of respectful offering, gentle showers of cold and warm water, succeeding each other alternatively, in a regular order". (Bigandet, p. 37).

**Bath Scene represented in Sculpture**

Plate 36, fig 58, from Swat, at present in Peshawar museum, portrays 'the bath of infant Buddha'. Here, two female attendants are supporting the child on a three-legged stool, while Indra and Brahma are pouring water from 'lotus', over his head. To the left and right of the child are four more divine figures, who have come to adore the new born Buddha. There is the usual halo round the infants' head and a usual umbrella over him.[57]

**Seven Steps**

Another miracle attached with Bodhisattva's birth is of seven steps. DN (II 15.29) enumerates it as one of the signs (No. 29) of Bodhisattva's birth. Here, when born, the child stands with his face towards the north, walks seven steps, gauges all the directions under the white canopy and utters the historic words that this was his last birth:

"Aggo ham asmi lokassa

Jettho ham asmi lokássa

Settho ham asmi

Lokassa, ayam antima jati

notthi dāne punabhhavo" (D.N. II 15)

In MN. (III. 123) Buddha is supposed to have told : as soon as Boddhisattva is born, he stands on even foot and facing north takes seven strides, while white sunshade is being held over him. He scans all the quarters and utters as with the voice of a bull.[58] "I am chief in the world, I am the best in the world, I am eldest in the world. This is the last birth, there is not now again becoming."

57 J. Marshall, *the B. Art of G.*

58 *MA*. IV 185 *DA*. II 439 say āsabhin ti uttamaṁ (*MN* II, 123 Sutta, fln. 5 p. 168).
Mahuratth Vilasini adds, "I am the supreme in the world, this is my last birth on earth and laughs a loud laugh," (*N. Katha* R. Davids fln. 2 p. 155)

In Nidānakatha...he stands up on the ground and looks towards the east... searching the ten directions (N.S.E.W, four intermediate, the zenith and the nadir) and finding no one like himself, he takes seven strides saying, "this is the best direction". And as he walked "the great Brahma held over him the white umbrella, and the Suyama followed him with the fan, and other devas with the other symbols of royalty in their hands. Then, stopping at the seventh step, he sent forth his noble voice and shouted the shout of victory, beginning with, "I am the chief of the world".[59]

Mahavastu (II. pp. 18-21) relates these seven steps taken by Bodhisattva, because he was tired with his stay in the womb. He surveys all the regions and proclaims the truth that this was his last birth on earth and laughs a loud laugh.[60]

Here much importance is attached to his laughter. It explains "Then the Prince of Speakers, surveying the regions, espies thousands of kotis of devas, and this is why he laughs."

"As soon as he is born the devas of Māra's world say to him, "thou wilt become a wealthy universal king over the four continents." "But he laughs at that and says, you do not know me for what I am. For I shall become Supreme of Men, all knowing and all-seeing."

In L.V. (p. 62ff)[61] the same legend is given a different version. With his face first towards east and then in all the remaining nine directives, he takes seven strides in each and utters a few words. Here many miracles are attached with these seven steps in all the ten directions.

Then surveying all the directions he says, I am the supreme of men, all knowing and all seeing. I am born for the salvation of the universe. Devas in the sky at that time held a white canopy over him.

59 अग्गोहमस्मि लोकस्स ।

60 The future Buddha, in three births (1) as Mahosadha (2) Vessantara and (3) in the birth as Gautama Buddha, utters these words immediately leaving his mother's womb. In his birth as Mahasadhaka Sakka places some fine sandal-wood in Bodhisattva's hands and goes away. Being asked, he tells his mother that it was 'herb medicine' (oṣādhadāraka) which being kept in an earthen ware becomes a drug for the blind, deaf and others. In the Vessantara birth, as soon as he is born he begs something from his mother to be given in charity. The mother places (Bodhisattva's) hand in a bag containing a thousand. In his third birth he sings the song of victory (N. Katha, R. Davids, pp. 155-6).

61 यदा सप्त पदाँ गत्वा ब्रह्मस्वर मुदाहरि
जरामरण विघाति भिषग्वर: इवोद्भूत: ।
ज्येष्ठंऽहं सर्वं लोकस्य श्रेष्ठो (लोके विनायक:)
*Ibid.*, 35 p. 67.
श्वेतं च विपुलं छत्रं चामरांश्च शुभाम्वरान् ।
अन्तरीक्षे गता देवा: स्नापयान्ते नरर्षभम् ।।
*Ibid.*, [illegible]

In Tibetan Tradition (Dulva. f: 458) the infant Buddha takes seven steps in the direction of each of the cardinal points and utters:

"Looking to the east says "I will reach the highest Nirvāṇa".

To the South "I will be the first of all creations".

To the West, "This will be my last birth."

To the North "I will cross the ocean of existence." (Rockhill, Buddha p. 16).[62]

In Burmese tradition he jumps over a distance of seven lenghts of a foot in the northern direction, exclaiming, "This is my last birth, there shall be to me no state of existence."

The tradition continues. In Aśvaghoṣa's works, the child prince, soon after his birth, walks seven steps with unwavering feet (B I. 14), surveys the four quarters and proclaims the truth. "I am born for enlightenment, for the good of the world. This is my last birth in the phenomena" (B.I. 15). Devas in the sky, remaining invisible, held up a white umbrella and bowing their head muttered blessings (B.I.18).

This prophesy he fullfills in his life. He conquers Māra and reaches the stage of enlightenment. "Then he comes to an understanding of the holy stage which can[63] neither pass away nor be the last" (S III 7).

All accounts agree, as far as seven strides are concerned. But the tradition of directions differs. In Pali (DN, & MN) it is North, in LV the ten quarters; in Mhv all the regions and in Aśvaghoṣa four directions are surveyed before uttering the words.

These seven steps of Bodhisattva can be compared with the myth of seven steps of Viṣnu. Miracles accompanying the birth, in the commentaries have been assigned their symbolic meanings as follows :

"In DA. 439 this standing on the earth means the attaining of four iddipādas, facing north implies the spiritual conquest of multitudes; the seven strides are the seven bhajjaṇgas; the canopy is the umbrella of emancipation; looking round means unveiled knowledge, fearlessness denotes the irrevokable turning of the wheel of Law; the mention of the last birth, the arhatship he will attain in this life etc. —". (DPPN p. 299 fln. 27).

**Seven steps in Sculpture**

The birth of Buddha and seven steps are shown in fourth and fifth century Gandhāra Art. They are lying in Paṭṇa museum and Calcutta museum.[64]

62 Cf. Bigandet p. 37.
*Fa-hein*, Beal, p. 85.
63 Cf. *B.* XIII ch.
64 *The way of Buddha* II 24 and 25 Plates

Plate 34 fig 55 (J Marshall, the B.A. of Gandhāra) from Swat (at present in Peshawar Museum) depicts the seven steps of Buddha.

Here he stands under the royal umbrella in the centre. Behind him is the attendant holding the umbrella shaft with his left hand. He has the fly-whisk in the right hand. On the left side of the infant is Indra and on the right side is Brahma, with a 'Kamandalu' in his left hand. Behind the two gods are three other heavenly beings.

**Body Marks**

In Selasutta (Sn) Sela refers to the Brahmanic tradition of thirty-two body marks of a great man. The possessor of these marks of lives in a house becomes a universal king and if he adopts a houseless state, he becomes a perfectly enlightened one. Here Sela finds them on the body of Buddha and praises him (Sn 549 ff).

In Nikayas Mahāpadana Sutta (DN II 16·19) narrates thirty-two body marks of Vipassi (pre-Buddha), Lakkhana Sutta (DN III 143-8) assigns thirty-two body marks to a two career monarch or "a turner of the wheel and a righteous lord of right". Here, according to the general rule, the superman acquires beneath the sole of his feet a thousand-spoked wheel with tyre and hub complete and well divided in every way.

Brahmayu Sutta (MN 91, 134 ff) gives the list of thirty-two signs of Gautama, along with other particulars,[65] which are evidently the characteristics of all the Buddhas.

Mahāpuruṣa Sutta (Sn. 158) and Vasakāra Sutta (AN. II 35 ff) gives the Buddhist as against the pre-Buddhist interpretation of great man[66].

Nidānakatha (R Davids. p 92) tells Dipaṅkara Buddha and thirty-two marks of a Superman, "eighty-two beauties attended by a halo of a fathoms depth and sending forth in streams, six-hued Buddha rays."[76]

The Pali tradition of Buddha, having thirty-two body marks, is also preserved in Sanskrit Buddhist works.

Milindapañho 75 (p. 116)[68] describes Buddha having thirty-two bodily marks of a great man and eight subsidiary characteristics : that he had skin of golden colour and "there spread around him a halo of a fathom's length."

65 Besides these marks, 108 marks on each foot are also attributed to Buddha. (Hardy, *Manual*, p. 367).

66 *MN* II fin. 4 p. 317.

67 *J.I.* (Cowell) refers to signs and marks of Buddhahood without telling the number.

68 *SBE* XXXV.

Aśokāvadana[69] refers to these marks as pleasing and adoring the different limbs of Tathāgata.

The tradition of Śākya Buddha endowed with characteristic signs on the body is foretold by Brahmaṇas in Tibetan tradition (Asiat. Res. XX p. 289). Tārānātha (H of B Intro. p. 5), in the benedictory verse, mentions lakṣanas and Vyañjaṅas i.e. thirty-two body marks and eighty perfections of Buddha.

*Mahavastu* (I 226)

On the analogy of DN, assigns thirty-two marks to great man. This very work, in the later part (Mhv. II 43-44, p. 40 ff), adds the list of eighty secondary characteristics (anuvyañjanan) which are again assigned to exalted Buddhas: "——nails long, copper coloured and glossy. Their fingers are beautiful, and rounded——level feet . . . limbs are soft, flawless, superb well-shaped and well knit——lines on the hands are deep, unbroken and uninterrupted——voice like the sound of an elephant's cry——gait, like the movement of an elephant a bull or lion……etc.[70].

L.V.[71] assigns thirty-two body marks, particularly to Gautama Buddha and generally to all the Buddhas. It also assigns eighty secondary signs (asitianubyañjana) such as copper coloured nails, glossy and prominent sinews which are hidden and without knots etc.

Aśvaghoṣa has also mentioned these signs in his Kavyas on the body of Bodhisattva i.e. Gautama or Siddhārtha, and this description agrees with LV and Mhv:

Siddhārtha's soles of the feet and the palms of hands had wheel sign, the fingers of the toes and hands were joined by a web. His webbed hands had Swastika marks. He had a circle of hair growing betweeen his eyebrows, and his testicals were with-

69 तथागत वपुरथो त्तमलक्षणाढ्यमादर्शय न्नयनशान्ति करं नराणां ।
प्रत्यग्र रङ्गमिव चित्रपटं महार्हमुद्घटयन जनमासौ तदलंचकरि ॥
Sahitya Acedemy Ed. p. 24.

70 *Mhv*. I. 226. pp. 180-81. They are interpreted by J.J. Jones on the basis of the list given in ***D.N.*** III. 143 (D. II. 17 ff) and the English Tr. in Dial. III 137. ff.
The order of body marks in Mhv differs from that of MN.

71 यस्या काया भवन्ति लक्षणवरा द्वात्रिंषति निर्मला.
LV. 72. p. 78.
लशणरनुव्यञ्जनैश्च
(*L.V.* (P.L. Vaidya) p. 79 gives the list of eighty secondary signs.
ताम्रां नखां विमलपत्र विशुद्धतेजसा ।
ते उत्थिथा त्वरित रूपविलम्व चुड़ा, मूर्ध्नंभिवन्दिषु क्रमांविमलप्रभस्य
*L.V.* 89 p. 81.
*L.V.* Lefmann. p. 105 ff.

drawn like an elephant. He had a radiant body, beautifully webbed hands and long eyes.[72]

*Lalitavistara* and *Buddhacarita* agree in toto in their description that Bodhisattva's toes and fingers were webbed and that there was a tuft of hair between his brows and that his testicals were withdrawn from sight like those of an elephant.

In Aśvaghoṣa (B I 64) the palm of the Buddha are marked with the wheel, whereas in LV the feet were so marked.[73]

The Brahmaṇic tradition of thirty two body marks of a great man are assigned to Buddha in Sutta Nipata. The number of these marks is added with eighty secondary characteristics in Mahavastu and later literature.[74]

**Earthquakes**

As glorious lights, so earthquakes are conventional miracles that constitute a necessary part of important events in Buddha's life.

Dīgha Nikaya (II 107-9)[75] records eight earthquakes. One earthquake mentioned here is natural phenomena, one is caused by the supernatural powers attained by the Yogis (Brahmaṇas or Sramaṇas) and six are common to the Bodhisattva :

(1) "The earth is established on water, the water on wind and the wind rests upon space." When the mighty winds blow (at a special time), the waters are shaken. The moving waters causes earthshake (DN. 107, 13).

(2) A great Brahmaṇa intellectual or recluse, who has his heart well under control or is a god or devata (fairy) or great power. He can make the earth shake or move. (ibid. 108.14)

The legend of earthquake miracles in the life of a Bodhisattva are :

(3) When a Bodhisattva consciously leaves his temporary abode in heaven and is conceived by his mother on earth.

(4) When he quits his mother's womb.

(5) When he attains enlightenment.

(6) When he finds the sublime kingdom of righteousness or preaches the first sermon.

72 *B.I.* 60, VI 54. VIII. 55 X 9.
73 'Tasya tan Sucaraṇav cakraṅkitan śobhanam' (*LV* Lefmann p. 110).
"Cakraṅkapānim Sa tatha mahāṛsir...." (B. I. 64).
cf. also pādatalayormaharāja (Lefmann Ed. reads differently)
Sarvarth-siddhasya cakre Jate (R L Mitra's ed. *LV*, p. 121).
cf. *Buddhavaṁsa* I. 37 (Yatha tuhaṃ mahāvīra pādesu cakkalakkanaṃ).
74 cf. Body marks (Ch. VI) in my *Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*.
75 *Dialogue* p. 114 ff.

(7) When he consciously and deliberately rejects the remainder of his life and,

(8) When he passes away and nothing whatsoever is left behind.

The above eight remote causes for the appearance of mighty earthquakes are explained by Buddha to Ananda in Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (SBE XI p. 44 ff).

The tradition of earthquakes continued in later Pali works. Earthquakes occur when Bodhisattva enters his mother's womb;[76] when the Brahmaṇas interpret the dream of Māyādevi,[77] when he firmly standing with even feet goes towards the north with seven steps and surveying all the quarters utters the historic words"——this is my last birth. There is now no existence,[78] and when he leaves Kapilvastu".[79]

The above tradition has also been followed in these Sanskrit sources as well, though the accounts differ.

In Mahavastu (I. 164, II 10 (p. 9) the great earth shakes and quakes six times, when Buddha decends from heaven.[80] LV (II. 9.6 ff) also tells of earthquake at the time of future Buddha's birth, but it records of eight premonitary signs that become explicit on this occasion.[81]

Aśvaghoṣa, who maintains the tradition, however, has recorded the earthquakes in his own characteristic poetic expressions : According to him, at the birth of prince Siddhārtha the earth quaked and trembled like a ship, struck with winds or waves (B I 21 ; S. II. 52). Again when he attained enlightenment "the earth swayed like a woman drunken with wine, the quarters shown bright with crowds of Siddhas and mighty drums resounded in the sky." (B XIV 87).

**Family and Gotra**

Gautama, as the gotra of Buddha, is referred to in Sonadaṇda Sutta.[82] Here he is mentioned as coming of a very rich and well-to-do Kṣatriya family, and a decendant from the Okkaka. "Aprimeyye iti kappe ukkāka kulé Sambhavo, gotama nama gottèna satthe loke bhavissati"..." Samand khalo bho gotama pahutam... samand kkalu bho gotamo... uccehule, khattiyakule addhakule babbajito mahadhano mahabhoga. ..."

76 *Nidānakatha* (Avidure Nidāna)
*Acchariyabbhuta dhamma Sutta* 120 (MN. 123 p. 165).
77 *Nidānakatha* (R. Davids) p. 175.
78 *Nidānakatha* (Avidure Nidāna)
*Acchariyabbhuta dhamma Sutta.*
79 *Nidānakatha* p. 175.
80 In Pali (*DN*) earthquakes six times in the life of Buddha (Supra).
81 T. Rahuls, *Mhv Study.* p. 193.
cf. *Tibetan Tradition* (Asiat Res. XX p. 288.
82 *DN* I. 115.

The descent of Buddha from okkaka family is given in Ambatta Sutta (DN) and Sutta Nipata as well.

The conversion of the ancestors of Buddha into Gautama Gotra from Kautsas gotra is told by Aśvaghoṣa (S.I. 22). Here Kapila Gautama become their preceptor and Guru's gotra is given to the Śākya princes.

**Clan**

There are innumerable references to Budhha's heritage from Śākya clan. In Ambatta Sutta (DN) Ambatta says : "ekam idāham bho Gotama samyano ācariyassa brahmaṇassa pokkhara sātissa kenacid eva karaniyena kapilavatthum aganmāsin yena sakyanām santāgaramter' upasamkamin, ten kho pana samyena sambhuta sakya c'eva sakyakumara ca santāgāra uccesu āsanesu nisinna honti——"

In Mahāsaccakasutta (DN) 246 (p. 301) Buddha tells, "My father the śākyan---". Similarly in Mahavagga (I 54) Buddha's father is called Sakka Śuddhodana.

Therigatha commentary (Paramatthadipani p. 1) refers to Buddha's heritage from Śākyakula—— "śākyarajkule śuddhodana Mahārajjessa gahe——". The story of Buddha's ancestors being called śākas is told by Aśvaghoṣa in S.I. 24 : "As they made a dwelling shaded by śāka trees, these scions of Ibṣvāku's race came to be known as Śakyas".[83]

According to the commentaries and Sanskrit tradition, Buddha was the son of a king and that he would have become a universal king, had he not renounced the world. It is only from the earlier traditional references that we conclude and find traces of Śākyas being under Kosalas.[84]

Aggañña Sutta (DN) refers to Kosalas supremacy over Sākyas, "Sakya kho pana Vasetha (Buddha) raṅño o Pasenadikosalassa anantara anyutta bhavanti karont kho vāsettha śakya ranne Pasenadimhi kosalanipacca kāram abhivādanam paccutthānam anjalikammam samicikamman——".

Dhammacetiyasutta (MN II p. 306) also speaks of the fact. Here king Pasendi says "Sir the lord is a noble and I too am a noble, the lord is a Kosalan, I too am a Kosalan——" (Bhagva-pi kosalako aham pi kosalako).

Thus Gautama was the gotra of Buddha. He belonged to the family of Śakyas. His father was not an independent king but a chieftain, under the king of Kosala. He was the decendant of a high kṣatriya family.

83 For details please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times.*"
84 For details please see my work '*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times.*'

## Names

### Parents

Out of the four Nikayas, only the Mahāpadāna Sutta (DN II. 14)[85] gives the names of Buddha's parents, the father Śuddhodana and the mother Māyā. The older legend seems to know nothing about Śuddhodana and speaks of Śākyas, rich in gold. The legend of Kṣatriya descent is recorded in Sonadanda Sutta (DN).

In Buddhavaṁśa, Buddha himself selects his parent and says :

Nagram Kapilvatthu me rājā Śuddhodanapita,

Mayam Janettika mata

Mayadevi to Vuccati (V. 13)

Jataka 68 (Cowell's Ed.) names Śuddhodana as the father and Māyā as the mother of Buddha.

In Nidānakatha (71, 76) Dipaṅkara Buddha foretells that Sumedha... "countless years hence will be a Buddha in this world ... the mother that bears him shall be called Māyā, his father will be Śuddhodana, he himself will be Gautama". (Tr. R. Davids p. 96).

Paramatthadipani (pp. 1, 83) tells of Śuddhodana as the father of Gautama in Śākyakula (family) "Śākyarājakule Śuddhodana Mahārājassa gehe Sato Sampajāno—" "Raññо Śuddhodanasssaham dhita asimanindita . . .".

In Tibetan tradition Bodhisattva, while still in Tuṣita heaven (before his incarnation in the form of elephant), tells the gods that he has selected the house of Śuddhodana, a king of Sākya race, living in Kapilvastu, because of the purity and celebrity of his family. Then he descends from heaven and in the form of an elephant enters the body of Māyādevi. (Asiat Res. XX p. 287).

Hence the father Śuddhodana and mother Māyā is the selection of Bodhisattva.

In the Tibetan source Dul-va "She brought forth a child of such extraordinary supernatural beauty that they called her Māyā". (Rockhill, Buddha p. 14).[86]

In Burmese tradition (Bigandet pp. 13, 15, 27) Buddha's mother is called Māyā and her sister Prajāpati. Lalitavistara knows Māyā or Mahāmāyā and Prajāpati as the wives of Śuddhodana. Prajāpati here also appears as Mahāprajāvati, a form which suggests 'rich in offspring'.[87]

85 The name (Śuddhodana) does not appear in the first four Nikayas, except in the legendary Mahāpadāna Suttanta of *DN*. It is used repeatedly in Apadāna (ch. I. 84) where he is termed mahipati or great lord (II. p. 501) *J.G. Jennings* ftn. p. 10).

86 To Senart "Māyā, who dies a few days after the birth of her son, is the morning vapor, which vanishes before the light of the sun". (Oldenberg, *Buddha* p. 93).

87 *LV* pp. 45-6.
E.J. Thomas, *L of B*, p. 25.
*LV* (Lef.) p. 28. describes king Śuddhodan, to have one thousand wives and Mahāmāyā was head queen.

Mahavastu tells that Śuddhodana received the hand of seven sisters. He retained two : Māyā and Mahāprajāpati and gave the other five to his five brothers.

The charming babe, the thoughtful sage, the preacher of the highest truth was born to Māyā from her right side, without hurting her (Mhv. I. 150 p. 118). Māyā is called the queen, the mother of the lord of men (Buddha) (Mhv I. 155, p. 122).

In Aśvaghoṣa's kavyas, Śuddhodana of Ikṣvaku race and Mahāmāyā, were the parents of Buddha. (B I. 1-2, 5, 9.S II 49). Māyā died (S II. 18) and the young child was brought up by Māyā's sister (S II. 19).

The name Māyā of Buddha's mother has been connected with Māyā doctrine of Vedanta by mythologists. "But the sense of Māyā, as cosmic illusion, does not either exist in Pali or Sanskrit works. Māyā is magic power, deception". The idea of magic power of beauty is often connected with woman's name e.g. 'Ummadanti' the intoxicating, Pabhavati-the prepossessing ; Manohara-Captivating the mind."[88] Aśvaghoṣa also says the she was called "Mahāmāya from her resemblance to the incomparable Māyā". (B I. 2)[89]

Historically viewed, Māyā seems to be the name————. The love and regard for the mother of their teacher Buddha, has caused the poets and mythologists to web stories around it. So, basing on tradition, it can be safely said that Śuddhodana was the father and Māyā was the mother of Buddha, not because of any particular reason, but because this was her name.

**Buddha**

In Buddhist literature Śuddhodana's son is called *Siddhārtha*, Gautama, Śākya Buddha etc. But what is his real name ?

Nidānakatha (p 160-1) mentions the rite of choosing a name for Bodhisattva. Here a grand function takes place on the fifth day of his birth, where 108 persons were fed nicely (including rice cooked in milk) and were rewarded. There is no mention of the name given to the child, but the Brahmaṇas only forecast the future from the body-signs *i.e.* either he would be a monarch or a Buddha. Only the youngest of them, Kondanya, beholding the perfection of marks, said 'verily he will become a Buddha and remove the veils of sin and ignorance from the world.'

The name Siddhāttha or Siddhārtha (accomplished purpose) is traditional and is not found in four Nikayas in Vinaya Pitaka. It is frequently used in Apadāna (story of the saints) and in 13th Book of Khuddaka Nikaya.

88 "The word Māyā is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Māya', Meyati iti Māyā i.e., which is in motion, the 'real' of things, until the turbulent ocean of the motion of thought calms down, to be able to see the bottom of the thought 'citta', 'consciousness' in the brain" (*The Vedic Path*, Quarterly *J. of Vedic Indological and Scientific research*, Vol. XLV. No. 4, March 1982, p. 2).

89 J.G. Jennings, V. *B.* fln. 8 p. 9.

In Mahavastu I. 227 (p. 182) king Avcimat asks the Brahmaṇas to give a fitting name to his child. The Brahmaṇas replied, "your majesty, when the child was born, a great resplendent light appeared, hence the child be named Dipaṅkara." Thus the past Buddha was named Dipaṅkara.

When a son was born to Śuddhodana, all the affairs of the king prospered. Hence, he, being a boon (lāncaka or lambaka)[99] of men, was named Sarvārthasiddha. (Mhv II. 26 p 23). Here no name-giving ceremony or naming the child so, even by the Brahmaṇas, (as in the case of Dipaṅkara) is mentioned.

"Jatamatre kumāre rthasiddhi sukkhi Sarvāsatva abhū Yāvadavicum............ utthapaniya gātha (Jate jagatapradhāne Sarve arthā pradakṣina rajña (Jate jagat pradhāne sarve artha pradakṣina rajṅoi ! Tena marlambakasya nāmam sarvārtha Siddha iti" (Mhv. Lefmann, II p. 26).

Naming the prince Sarvārthasiddha (p. 69)[91] has been explained in L.V. "Asya hi jātmātrena mama Sarvārthah Saṃsiddha Yannavahmasya Sarvārthasiddha iti nāma kuryaṃ, tato rāja Bodhisattvam......Sarvārtha siddhayam kumāro nama bhavatu iti namasyākārṣīt." Here also no name giving ceremony is mentioned, but we are told hat because his birth brought accomplishment of all desires, he was named so.

In Tibetan tradition, Śuddhodana himself gave his son the name of 'Siddhārtha' (Asiat. Res. XX p 289).

Dul-va III f. 460[a] tells that as on the same day, on which the future Buddha was born, many blessings of different kinds were granted to his father, so the child was called Sarvārthasiddha (all fulfilled) Thans—chad—grub. (Rockhill, Buddha p.17).

Aśvaghoṣa in Buddhacarita[92] mentions : Śuddhodana, ten days after the birth of his son, performed sacrifices and other rites and donated, for the welfare of his son. Further it also tells that the birth of the prince increased the wealth and prosperity of the State (Sarva+artha+siddha) and brought universal accomplishment of all desires. Accordingly, the child was named 'Sarvārtha Siddha'.[93]

90 Pali tr. translate as 'Excellent'. It seems to be derivative of lañca 'gift' or 'present',— night be translated as boon of princes. Treckner in Milinda p. 424 translated 'lañcaka' as excellent gift (Mhv. III. fln. 3 p. 90).

91 ततो राजा शुद्धोदनस्यैतदभूत किमहं कुमारस्य नामधेयं
करिष्यामीति ततोऽस्यै तद्भूत' ' 'अस्य हि जातमात्रेण मम सर्वार्थाः संसीद्धा ।
यन्ववहमस्य सर्वार्थसिद्ध इति नाम कुर्याप्त । ततो राजा वोधिसत्त्वं महत
सत्कारेण सत्कृत्य सर्वार्थसिद्धोऽयं कुमारो नाम्ना भवतु इति नामास्याकार्षीत् ।
*L,V.* (P. L. Vaidya p. 69).

92 *B.I*, 89, *II*. 1-14.

93 B. *II*. 17 ततोनृपतस्थ सुतस्य नाम सर्वार्थसिद्धोऽयमिति प्रचक्रे ।
S. II. 63. सर्वार्थ सिद्धस्तु
All the ills were removed at the birth of Siddhārtha (DN II, 1, p. 99).

Here the mention of 'other' rites in B.I 83 may be an indirect hint towards 'Nāmkaran Saṅskār, along with other prevalent or customary rites. But no direct mention or reference is made for such a function. King Śuddhodana has himself named his son so, as Dipaṅkar is named in Mahavastu.

Thus it is quite clear that there is no record to tell about the special name-giving ceremony, in L.V. or Mhv or in B. Buddhacarita (I. 89) mentions the birth celebrations and donations to the Brahmaṇas (B I. 48).

He was named Sarvāratha Siddha or Siddhārtha Siddha by his father, for the reasons assigned above or was it an epithet or the nick-name given to him ?

In the absence of any other (literary or epigraphic evidence) it can be safely said that Siddhārtha was the name, given by his father, who expected his son to rise to all his expectations (Sarva+Artha+Siddhi) or with whose birth, as the royal-race was assured, it fulfilled his ardent desire.[94] Otherwise Nidānakatha's "Siddhāttha", LV's "Siddhartha" Mahavastu and Aśvaghoṣa's (B & S) "Sarvārthasiddha", all have no different meaning and are one and the same.

**Buddha's wife and son**

*Buddhavaṁśa* contains the life of Gautama Buddha, the Śākyamuni in 25 ślokas. Here Bhaddakacca is mentioned as his wife and Rahula as his son.

She is called Yaśodhara in the commentary on the Thera-gatha (Psalms of the Brothern, p. 183). Bhaddā or Yaśodhara names are not found in the first four Nikayas or Vinaya Pitaka. But Bhaddhākacca is mentioned again in Buddhavaṁśa (XXVI. 15) and Bhaddhākaccana once in A.N. The Thera Rahula is called the 'own son of Gautama' (Gotamassa Bhagvat-o atra-jo) in the Apadāna, but it is not told there as the child of Bhaddhākacca or Yaśodhara.[95]

Nidānakatha (Pali p. 68) gives the name of Buddha's son as Rahula, but does not name his mother and speaks of her only as Rahulamata Devi. It tells she was 'devi aggamahesi' the chief queen of Bodhisattva.[96]

Mahavagga I. 54 (p. 208 ff) also names Rahula as the son of Buddha, but does not name his wife. It also calls her 'Rahula's mother'. The name of Buddha's wife or Rahula's mother is also not found in other older available records. However, it is in later tradition that she in named mostly as Yaśodhara.[97]

94 "The importance of a son" is discussed in my *Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". Ch. VI.

95 J.G. Jennings, *Buddha*, pp. 447.

96 There is no record to tell that Buddha had more than one wife. But the commentaries have given profusion of names, such as Bhaddā, Sabhaddaka, Bimba etc. (*J.G. Jennings* p. 9 and ftns. 5 and 6).

97 May be she was Buddha's former wife (M. Vagga. fln. 1 p. 208). For details infra "*Siddhārtha's marriage.*"

Rahula was his only son and is mentioned many a times in Pali and Sanskrit works. He, when grown up, was converted by Buddha to his order (Rahula Sutta in K. Vagga).

In Mahavastu (I. 128 pp 101, 121) Yaśodhara is the mother of Rahula and the head of 530 maidens (II. 25 p 22).

In LV (Ch XII) Gopa of Śakya family is selected as the wife of Śuddhodana's son Bodhisattva.[98]

In Buddhacarita (VI. 36) Siddhārtha's wife is called Yaśodhara. Rhys Davids concludes that Siddhārtha, the son of Māyā, married Subhadakañcana or Yaśodhara is also called Gautami, a common name for the Śākyana ladies.[100]

**Visit to the Temple**

The young son of Śuddhodana was taken to the temple of Kuldevata-according to Śākya custom. This episode is found only in Sankrit works, Mhv, LV, Aśvaghoṣa's works, and Tibetan sources.

The Pali tradition and Nidānakatha do not record the legend of infant or child Siddhārtha being taken to the temple of Śākya Kuldevata. (Just outside Kapilvastu).

LV (Ch. VIII) describes about Bodhisattva's visit to the Devakul or Kuldevata's temple. Here he was taken by his step-mother (aunt) Prajāpati Gautami. The legend is interesting : when he was being dressed up for the visit, he asks his mother, "where are you taking me" ? On coming to know that he was being taken to the temple to pay his respects to the devas, he says, there is no deva better than him ; he is the lord of devas.[101] Then as soon as he puts his right foot in the temple, all the devas get up from their seats and fall upon the feet of the Bodhisattva. Then there is a long description of many supernatural events taken place such as the rain of celestial flowers, the music of hundreds of musical instruments etc.

Mahavastu I (222—3, pp 177 II. 26 pp. 22 ff) narrates the legend in a very interesting style : According to Śākyan custom,[102] the prince was taken to worship the feet of goddess Abhya. But when he came in the presence of the goddess, it was his feet and not his head that the young child put forward. The goddess Abhya bowed her own head instead, at child's feet. Then the goddess said to another goddess, "It is

98 अथ खलु पुनः तेन समयेन दण्डपाणिः शाक्यस्वां दुहितरं गोपा शाक्यकन्या बौदिसत्त्वाय प्रादात् ।
*LV* (P.L. Vaidya) p. 108.

99 *Buddhism*, p. 52.

100 Beal, *R. Legend*. pp. 97-98,

101 *L.V.* VIII. 2. कत्तमोऽन्यु देव मम उत्तरि वो विशिटो. . .देवो न मेऽस्ति सदृषः कुत उत्तरं वा (2)

102 "Because Śākya children who seek divine protection always obtain what they ask". (G Bühler, *E.I.V.* 1898-99. p. 3).

not fitting that this child should worship me. And if he should make obeisance before another, that one's head would assuredly be split in seven". Here the Bodhisattva is taken to the temple on his way from Lumbini to Kapilvastu (where came sage Asita to see him) by queen Māyā devi and Śuddhodana.

Tibetan annals,[103] which are not perhaps as old as Pali works, record the event and connect two epithets with the event : According to the Śākya custom, the king took the child to bow down at the feet of the statue of Yakṣa (Cakyavardhana Cakya-hphel or spel). But the Yakṣa bowed down at his feet (Dulva II 460). "On the way every one was struck with the infant's bold appearance, so he received the record name of 'The Mighty one of the Śākyas or *Śākyamuni*". And when the king saw the Yakṣa bow at the feet of the child he exclaimed "He is god of gods, and the child was therefore called Devatideva (Dulva. f. 461) i.e. god surpassing the gods. The father worshipped him.

In Buddhacarita, Aśvaghoṣa has only cursorily referred to this legendary custom of paying homage to the ancestral gods and goddesses, and has not at all narrated this unnatural event. As soon as the decision to enter the city on an auspicious day was taken (B. I 85), the queen, taking the babe, did obeisance to the gods and entered for good fortunes a costly litter" (B.I. 86).

Here, the mother Māyādevi, on her way from Lumbini to Kapilvastu, takes the child to the temple, of course accompanied by Śuddhodana and the retinue.

Thus LV, Mhv & B. differ here. In LV. the babe is taken to the temple from Kapilvastu by Prajāpati (the stepmother of Gautama) while in Mhv & B. he is taken (just after his birth at Lumbini) on his way to Kapilvastu.

In Mhv. the temple is that of goddess Abhya, meaning without fear or danger, which can be the title of many gods. In Tibetan sources, he is worshipped by his father, as god of gods (Devatideva). Divyāvadana (391) tradition agrees with that of Tibetan (Rockhill p. 17).

Yuanchwang (6th century A.D.)[104] visited Kapilvastu. He records that on the east-side gate of the city, just outside, is a temple of Iśvara Deva. This temple contains a stone image of the god in the attitude of rising and bowing. This, according to him, is the temple where the infant Bodhisattva was taken, at the command of his father, to pay respect to the deities. As soon as the baby was borne to the temple, the images descended to pay respect to him. They returned to their places, when the child was carried away.

Beal recognises the scene of Bodhisattva's visit to Kuladeva as represented in Amaravati Stupa. This leads up to construe that the legend is quite old and Śiva

103 Rockhill, *Buddha*, p 17, Asiat Res. XX p. 289.

104 *Y-ch* (Watters) II p. 13
Beal, *Si-Yu-ki* II, p 23 note 59.

was the Kuladevata of the Śākyas. The temple is one of the old Śaivite monument.[105]

**Sage Asita's Visit**

The story of sage Asita's visit to see future Buddha is given in Nalakasutta (679-723 verses) of Sutta Nipāta,[106] Nidānakatha (R. Davids p. 157 ff), LV. VII (P.L. Vaidya p. 72 ff) Mahavastu (II. p. 27 ff) and *Buddhacarita* (I. 58 ff). In addition to these Pali and Sanskrit sources, it is also repeated in Tibetan and Burmese records.

Nalakasutta gives the oldest version of the story, though it seems to be a later addition to the Sutta.[107] The sage Kanhasiri, (Asita) seeing the rejoicings among the Tidiśa gods, being informed of the happy event of the birth of future Buddha, goes to the dwelling of Śuddhodana and asks to show him the child. The child is brought to him. From the signs and marks the sage prophesieses, "that without any superior is this, the most excellent of men" (690).

Then he starts crying, thinking that he would not live to see him as enlightened one. Having forecast this, the sage leaves the palace and taking pity on his sister's son, 'Nalaka' induces him to embrace Dharma of the incomparable one (695). Nalaka approaches him, when Siddhārtha becomes Buddha and asks for conversion. (692).

In the Nidānakatha (p 157 ff) it is a little different version. Here Kāla Devala (Asita) is a confident adviser of Śuddhodana.[108] He had passed the eight stages of religious attainment. Learning from the devas about the birth of a son to Śuddhodana, who sitting under the Bo-tree, will become a Buddha and "will find a kingdom of Righteousness", comes from the deva world to Śuddhodana and asks about the child. The child is brought and is ordered by the king that he should salute the sage. But the future Buddha turns his feet round and plants them on the matted hair of the ascetic.

The reason told here is "For in that birth there was no one worthy to be saluted by the Bodhisat, and if these ignorant ones had placed the head of future Buddha at the feet of the ascetic, assuredly the ascetic's head would have split in two". The ascetic rises from his seat, and saying "It is not right for me to work my own destruction", did homage to the Bodhisat. The king also, seeing the wonder, did homage to his son." (pp 157-8).

105 G. Buhler, *E.I.V.* (1898-99) p. 3.
Beal. *Si-Yu-ki II* p. 23 note 59.

106 *SBE X.* pp 123-29. When Krishna was born, Śiva comes to see him in Mahābhārata.

107 E.J. Thomas, *L of B*, pp 38-9.

108 Here Asita is a Tāpasa (an ascetic) and not a ṛṣi (*J. Thomas*, L of B p. 43) J.J. Jones says Mahavastu like *LV* has confused the residential chaplain of Himalayas, a recluse known as sage Asita with Asita Devala (*Mhv. II.* fn 2, p 27).

Then the story is as narrated in Sutta-Nipāta till the sage goes to his sister's house and exhorts his nephew 'Nalaka' to give up the world, which he does, thinking that his uncle is not a man to urge him without cause. Nalaka, taking a begging bowl in a bag, goes to the Himalayas and starts living the life of a recluse. When Buddha attains enlightenment, he approaches him, is converted and attains Arhatship.

In LV the sage Asita dwells with his nephew Naradatta on the side of a peak of the Himalayas. Beholding joys in heaven among the gods, he observes that a son with thirty-two major and eighty three minor marks is born to Śuddhodana. He tells Naradatta, of this child as future Buddha, about which he talks to Śuddhodana afterwards.

In L.V. sage Asita takes his nephew Naradatta with him to Śuddhodana at Kapilvastu. But unlike Pali tradition, there is no such wonder as the child putting his feet in the tresses of the sage and the sage falling at his feet. But considering him the future Buddha, he rises from his seat, clasps his hands, falls on Bodhisattva's feet and makes a rightway circuit.[109]

In Mahavastu (II p. 27 ff) Sage Asita comes from the South. He is the son of a Brahmaṇa of Ujjeni and lives in a hermitage on the Vindhya mountains. He learns, with divine eyes, that a virtuous, mighty and powerful son is born in the eastern city of Kapilvastu to Śuddhodana. Thereupon he resolves to go and see the child at proper time, when such a time comes, he goes travelling by air, by means of his magic power and reaches Kapilvastu. He expresses his desire to see the child. The boy is brought to the seer, perceiving the 32 body-marks of great man, the sage lifts his folded hands to his head, rises up and greets the boy reverently. Then the sage forecasts his Buddhahood and not kingship.

The Pali (Nidānakatha) story of child Buddha putting his tiny feet on the head of sage Asita is missing here. Instead the sage, though very learned, greets the child reverently.

In *Buddhacarita*, the sage Asita tells the king Śuddhodana that he heard a divine voice from the path of the sun, "To thee a son is born for enlightenment". (B.I 57). Listening to this voice, the sage went into trance and after understanding the matter through the signs, goes to see the Śākya prince (B.I 58).

The child had body-marks on the soles of his feet, the fingers and toes joined by web, hair growing between the eyebrows (B.I 60)[110] etc. Seeing all this, the eyes

109 प्रत्युत्थाय ततः कृताञ्जलिपुटो चरणवासौ वन्दते ।
देवस्त्वं स्वभिपूजितः सुबलवान् ऋषिभिच संवर्णितः ॥ LV. p. 78
वन्दे त्वां वरसार्थवाह त्रिभवे सर्वे जगे पूजितं (Ibid)
वन्दित्वा चरणौ ह्यसो मुनिवरः कृत्वा च प्रादक्षिणं Ibid p 79)

110 This agrees in toto with *LV*.

of the sage are brimmed with water (B.I. 62). This afflicts the king, he being worried about the line of his family, asks the cause (B.I 63-66). The cause of the sadness is the same that he would not be living to listen to the enlightened son of Śuddhodana. In the end, he charges his sister's son to listen to the words of Śiddhārtha and follow his teachings (B.I 81) when he becomes Buddha.

In L.V., Mhv, and Nidānakatha sage Asita weeps when he perceives that he would not live to see the Bodhisattva, attaining Buddhahood. In *Buddhacarita* he controls himself while weeping, reason being the same.

**Comparative Study**

The Pali name of the sage is Kāla-Devala and the Sanskrit name is Asita. Both mean Black.[111]

In B (I. 49) the great seer, learning through the power of his austerities, of the birth of one who was to put an end to birth, comes to the palace of Śākya king.

In Mahavastu (II. p 28) too the sage Asita, learning with divine eyes the birth of a virtuous, mighty and powerful son to Śuddhodana, resolves to go to see the child at proper time.

In B (I. 49) sage Asita's visit to see the future Buddha is just after the prophesy of the Brahmaṇas that either he would become an enlightened seer or a cakravartin monarch on earth (B.I 34).[112]

In Mahavastu it is at a later date "The same episode shows considerable variation in late commentaries and legendary excurses." (T. Rahula, Mhv. Study p. 205).

In B (I. 80), after forecasting the truth about his son to Śuddhodana, the sage Asita departs, as he had come by the path of air.

In L.V. also the sage comes flying like a swan and goes as he came (with his magic powers). In Mhv (II. p 27) "the sage was renowned in heaven for he travelled through air, being possessed of great magic power".

According to Burmese tradition, the news of Siddhārtha's birth is given to Śuddhodana by a Rathee Kāladevila, who takes his daily food in the palace of the prince. He definitely forecasts that the son of Śuddhodana would become Buddha. He, as in other sources, feels and that he would not live to see the day of his enlightenment and advises his nephew Nalaka to embrace the profession of Buddha.[113]

111 R. Davids, *Buddhism*, fln 3 p. 185.

112 According to Pali tradition, Sage Asita was the tutor of Śuddhodana and the precepts of morality were taught by him to Māyā. These relations required his immediate visit to Kapilvastu. (T. Rahule, *Mhv. Study*, p 206).
He was called '*Ālara*' because he was tall and lawny (piṅgala) and Kālama was his Gotra. *DN. A.* II. 569).

113 *Bigandet*, pp 41-42.

In Mahavastu (II pp 36-37) the king asks the cause of sage's weeping in many a words. Aśvaghoṣa agrees in toto with this description.

In Mahavastu (II p. 37) the king consoles the crying sage, saying "cast grief aside Brahmaṇa, be joyful, regain your composure. For this child will become the king of seven treasures, a lord of earth". Sage Asita replies "This child will not become the king, but will become the unsurpassed master".

In B (I. 64-66) the king asks the questions about the long life of the prince and general welfare. The sage removes these doubts (B I. 68), and says "He will give up the kingdom in his indifference to worldly pleasure, and through bitter struggles, grasping the final truth, he will shine forth as a sun of knowledge in the world to dispel the darkness of delusion." (B I. 69).

In Mhv. (II p. 39 ff) the sage exhorts Nārada, his nephew, to follow the counsel of Siddhārtha, when he attains Buddhaship, who becomes Bikṣu right from that day. In LV (VII. p 72 ff) sage is Maharṣi Asita and his nephew (sister's son) is called Naradatta. Here Naradatta is asked by the sage (in his cottage) to abandon the world under the teachings of Siddhārtha, when he becomes Buddha.[114]

In Buddhacarita sage Asita charges his sister's son on returning home to listen to Buddha and follow him. (B.I. 81). In LV and here the sage Asita specifically forecasts that Siddhārtha would become Buddha.

In Tibetan annals,[115] sage Asita is called Akleṣa (Kun-mongs-med) and lives on Sarvadhāra (hdsin) mountain. He is a mighty seer. He, along with Nalada (misbyin) his nephew, goes to see the child (Dulva f. 464 b). Asita takes the child in his arms and prophesieses, that he would leave his home at twenty-nine. He after six years' asciticism, would be enlightened and would accomplish the cessation of death.

However, soon afterwards, feeling his end approaching (Dulva. f. 467 b.), begs of Nalada to enter the order of the young Śākya, as soon as he finds the truth.

Here Asita tells specifically that the young Śākya would become Buddha.

114 वन्देत्वां वरसार्थवाह त्रिभवे सर्वे जगे पूजितं
असित प्राह च भागिनेय मुदित; संश्रूयतां भाषतो ।
बुद्ध वोधि यदा शृणोषि जगतो वर्तीत चक्रं हायं
शीघ्रं प्रव्रज शासनेऽस्य मुनये तत्प्राप्स्यसे निवृतिम् । *L.V*- 74. pp. 78-79

115 Rockhill, *Buddha* pp. 17-8. Asiat Res. XX. p 289.
*L.V.* does not mention the name of mountain. In LV. the ṛṣi is called Asita (or Kāl, Nāg-po, which agrees with the name given to him in Southern legend—Kāladevalo, *Schifner* calls the nephew Navada as does Beal p. 39. The Tibetan ˇmisbyin "given by a man" is in Sanskrit Navada or Naradatta. According to Spence Hardy, Manual p. 149, Kāladevala (Asita) had been chief counsellor of king Siṁhahann. The nephew he calls Naraka (p. 151). Bigandet calls him Nalaka. Rhys Davids in Buddhist stories p. 69 agrees with Spence Hardy in saying that he had been a Samapatti of the king. He also calls the nephew as Nalaka, p. 71" (Rockhill, *Buddha*, fin. p. 18).

According to Dulva (f. $467^b$) Nalada went to Benaras and joined the 500 mantra-studying Brahmaṇas. As he belonged to the family of Katya, later on, when converted by Buddha, is called Mahā Katyayans (Rockhill, p 18). Rhys Davids (Romantic Legend p. 61) and Bigandent (p 44) do not agree here. According to them, he becomes a disciple of Buddha shortly after his enlightenment and then goes back to Himalayas. He reaches Arhatship and dies there after seven months.

**Childhood and Youth**

Tradition does not throw much light on Siddhārtha's childhood and youth. Sporadic references are found in AN, MN, DN, Nidānakatha, Mahavagga (I. 7) ; LV, Mhv. and Aśvaghoṣa's Kavyas. The Tibetan and Burmese tradition repeat the same incidents.

In AN. (I. 38)[116] Buddha himself tells : "Monks ! I was delicately nurtued. In my father's house, lotus pools of blue, red and white lotuses were made for me—I used sandal-wood powder from Kaśi, Kaśi-cloth turban, jacket, tunic and cloak..." I had three palaces, one for winter, one for summer and one for rainy season......I came not down from my palace for three months".

The legend of three palaces for rainy, winter and summer seasons and fitted with every kind of gratification for the five senses, for the Vipassi is found in DN (II. 21. 38). In Mahāvagga (I. 7) these palaces are built for yasa.[117]

Nidānakatha (pp. 160-5), which preserves the Pali tradition records : Śuddhodana, on the fifth day of Bodhisattva's birth, was told by Kaudanya, the sign-expert, that he would renounce the world on seeing four omens, a man worn out by age, a sickman, a deadbody and a monk. The father, in order to avoid the sight of these four omens, provided his son with all the comforts. When he grew to youth, he built three palaces for him. One is nine stories high, the other is seven stories high and the third is five stories high, and are ministered by 40,000 dancing girls. The main aim is to keep him immersed in the pleasures of life and to avoid the four sights. These palaces were well guarded for miles, in four directions.[118]

Mahavastu (II. 115. ff), which preserves the tradition, elaborates. It does mention that the child Siddhārtha was delicately nurtured and three palaces were built for him for three seasons (cold, warm and rainy), it adds "My Śākyan father caused to be constructed in these palaces gabled upper rooms, plastered inside and outside, free from draught, with close-bolt doors, and well fitting casements, fumigated with incense

116 *Gradual Sayings*, p. 128.

117 Three palaces were built when Bodhisattva was 16 yrs. In Pali tradition (E.J. Thomas, *L of B*. p 48) Bigandet. I. p. 51).
The palaces were provided with bands of female musicians (*DN. II*. 21. 38. p 18).

118 चक्खुपथे आगमन निवारणत्यं चतूसु दिसासु गावुतो गावुतो आरक्खं ठपेसि ।
*Nidānakatha* (*Dr Mahesh Tiwari*, p. 143).

and embroidered with strips and braids of coloured cloth and with fastoons of flowers —Couches of gold, silver and precious stones, spread with sixteen fleecy covers, white blankets, counterpanes of many colours, woolen coverlets etc......I was provided : with various kinds of ointments, namely of aloe, sandalwood, black gum .... various kinds of flowers-atimukta, campaka-lillies etc . . . best quality of rice curry of various flavours . . . . . means of enjoying the five varieties of sensual pleasures, namely, dance, song, music, orchestra and women . . . . .".

Mahavastu also enumerates all the comforts and entertainments provided to young Siddhārtha by his father, who wanted him to become a Cakravartin king.

Lalitavistara (ch. XIII) tells of the luxurious life lead by Bodhisattva. In Ch. XIV[119] Bodhisattva causes the king to dream that his son is renouncing the world. On waking up, he builds three palaces for summer, rainy and winter season for him. The gates of these palaces were made so as to creak and make loud noise when opened. Each gate was guarded by five hundred men.

Aśvaghoṣa has preserved the legend and in his own sophisticated style, has mentioned about the luxuries provided by Raja Śuddhodana to Siddhārtha. There are no three palaces but only one white palace, which had different apartments, suiting each season. (B. II. 28-30).

Archaeologically, though the site has been excavated, it is very difficult to say whether there was one palace or three palaces. With the super structures missing and plinths remaining of many other buildings, it can not be said that they were palaces or ordinary residential sets.

**Education**

The most important part of the life of Siddhārtha is his education. It seems he was given proper training and education, which the age and precedent for a child of high family demanded.

In LV. (ch. 10) great importance is attached to this aspect. He is taken to school, though he knew all the scripts, letters of alphabet and their implication.

Here Vishvamitra is mentioned his teacher and the sixty-four Lipies include Chinese, Huna-lipi, Garuḍa-lipi, medical science etc.[120]

**Mahavastu**

In Mhv. (II. 74-77) and LV (ch. XII) Śākyas are described skilled in the art of archery. Siddhārtha had to display his skill in archery, fighting, boxing, cutting, stabbing in speed, in feets of strength to win the hand of Yaśodhara (Gopa).

119 *LV* (P.L. Vaidya) p. 135.

120 *LV* (P.L. Vaidya) X pp. 87-89.सर्वौषिधिनिष्यन्दा' This list of scripts current, in the order of the letters of the alphabet and philosophical terms beginning wit h these letters are narrated in this Ch.

Though Aśvaghoṣa has not mentioned Siddhārtha being admitted in a school, he tells (B. II. `4) that Siddhārtha took very little time to learn the sciences (Vidhya) suitable for his age. Sage Asita forecastes (B. I. 70) that child Siddhārtha, with the best of his Jñana (knowledge), will bring the world up, "which is being carried away in affliction" from the ocean of suffering. "He will shine forth as the sun of knowledge" (B. XII. 9).[121] Burmese tradition tells that he was an expert in eighteen sorts of arts and sciences. (Bigandet, p. 52). These arts were displayed by him in the public.

To conclude, whatever different expressions in different sources may be, Siddhārtha seems to have received the best education of the time. He was not only trained in Śāstras but śastras also. He had deep knowledge of Brahmaṇic (including Saṁkhya and Mimañsa). Vedic, Jainas etc. philosophies. Otherwise the career, which he adopted and the philosophy of Buddhism, which he gave to the world, was not possible.

**Education in Arts**

Ajanta paintings[122] depict the prince Siddhārtha sitting at the feet of a Teacher. The scene has been of great importance and attraction for many as reliefs of the Gandhāra School.

Victoria and Albert Museum London 15.51-1948 depicts Siddhārtha and companions on their way to school (2nd-4th. C.A.D.). It is from Gandhāra (Pakistan) and is grey Schist 32 x 36 cm. Here a small figure of Siddhārtha with a halo sits in a child's cart drawn by reins. His companions are holding writing palettes.[123]

**The ploughing festival**

This is one of the principal event in the life of Gautama.

In Māhasaccakasutta (MN) 246 (pp 300-1), Buddha himself tells Aggivessana: "I know that while my father Śākyan, was ploughing,[124] and I was sitting in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree, aloof from pleasures of senses, aloof from unskilled states of mind, entering on the first meditation, which is accompanied by initial thought, is born of aloofness, and is rapturous, and joyful, and while abiding therein, I thought could this be a way to awakening? Then following my mindfulness,[125] Aggivessana there was the consciousness: this is itself the way of awakening ..........."

Thus MN. refers to this ploughing scene as a very important event in the life of Bodhisattva, which in the later stage proved a turning point in his life. He, who

121 For details and the definition of Vidhya and Jñana please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*", Education. Ch.

122 J. Marshall, *Buddhist Art in Gandhara* pl. 34, p. 43.

123 *The Image of man*, p. 186, fig. 314.

124 According to *MNA*, II 290 this was a ritual sowing, Vappamaṅgala (*MN* I. 301).

125 *MNA*, II 291. Inbreathing and outbreathing (*MN*. I. p 301).

starved to the point of skeleton, when realised that the true path was (the thought of Jambu-tree trance) the bliss of rapturous state, a part of sense pleasures and unskilled state of mind, decided to take food, to strengthen the body and to have a strong will power to enter into meditation.

Nidānakatha (pp 163 ff) tells the story of ploughing festival organised by the king. On the day of the festival, one thousand ploughs are yoked for the king. One hundred minus one are, with the oxen-reins and cross-bars, ornamented with silver. The king's plough is ornamented with gold.

He leaves his child under a Jambu-tree in the care of nurses. After a little time, when the nurses also go to see the scene and cook, the future Buddha, looking all round, and seeing no one, gets up quickly, seats himself cross-legged, and holding his breath, sinks into the first trance (dhyāna).[126]

At noon, the shade of other trees recede but the shade of the said Jambu-tree remains in position. This miracle story spreads in no time, then comes the king on the spot. Seeing this he pays homage to his son.

Here the future Buddha's age is not recorded. He is still a child, as he is left in the care of nurses under the jambu-tree.

Lalitavistara [127] maintains the Pali legend, but in a different way. Here Kumar Siddhārtha visits a 'Kṛṣi grām' (Farming village), with his friends. Finding one Jambu-tree, he goes into trance under it. The shades of other trees recede but not of this particular tree. Finding which, the sages, Vanadevata (forest deities) etc. all lavish great praise upon him. Śuddhodana searches for his son. Coming to know that he has gone to the ploughing-village, goes there and comes to know of the miracles. He with both the hands, salutes his son.

Here Boddhisattva is a grown-up person, who goes to the farming village with his friends, without the knowledge of his father. Further, Buddha tells that he went into first trance in his father's garden (Pitur Udhyāne).[128]

The story of ploughing scene differs in Mhv. (II.45, 9-12). According to it, one day the prince (Siddhārtha) goes to the pleasure garden, with woman-folk and a young boy, while strolling, he comes to the tilled land and finds some ploughs at work. Suddenly a frog and snake are thrown by the ploughs. The young boy picks up the frog to eat and throws away the snake. This incident had deep effect upon the tender prince and he started meditating on the miseries of life and death : "Pleasure, the body and life itself are burnt out together. Now I shall attain deathless release from existence. For I can not check my exertion, which is like the flow of the ocean's water on the sea-shore".

126 For the explanation of 'dhyāna', please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa & His Times*".
127 *L.V.* (P.L. Vaidya) XI. 27, 28 (p. 94).
128 *L.V.* (P.L. Vaidya) XVI. p. 193.

Bodhisattva was sitting under the shade of a rose-apple tree. The shadows of all the trees left them at noon, but the shade of this tree did not leave him. He stays there and is immersed in first meditation.

Then follows the account of appreciation of the future Buddha by Devas. Suddhodana, his father, bows at his feet, while he is sitting under the shade of the rose-apple tree.

There is no mention of the age of Siddhārtha, but since he goes to the pleasure-garden with women and could walk and be alone, it means he was not a child.

According to Tibetan sources, Śuddhodana sent Siddhārtha to divert his mind to a village to look after the ploughmen. There he saw labourers with hair erect, uncovered hands and feet, dirty bodies and running sweat : and "the work-oxen pricked with iron whips, their backs and rumps streaming with blood, hungry and thirsty, panting with fast beating hearts, burdened with yoke, which they had to drag great distances, flies and insects biting them, with bleeding and suppurating wounds, the ploughshare wounding them running at the mouth and nose, covered with gadflies and mosquitoes (sbrang-bu-natchu rings Dulva. f.9ᵛ). His tender heart was touched with compassion." When being asked they told that they were kings' slaves (properly). Siddhārtha freed the men and oxen and himself sat under the Jambu-tree in earnest meditation. His father found him there and to his amazement the shade had not moved from where he was.[129]

The same account is found in Divyāvadava, where the above scenes (of a farming village and setting the ploughmen and oxen free) is mentioned between the seeing of the four signs and the great renunciation.[130]

Aśvaghoṣa, however, has given a more realistic touch to the ploughing scene. He has put the scene in Siddhārtha's fourth visit.[131] Longing for spiritual peace, riding on his Kanthaka, he goes to the forest and passes through fields along with his companions (ministers' sons) (B III. 1-4). He sees the ploughed land, its surface broken, "the young grass torn up and scattered by the ploughs and littered with dead worms, insects and other creatures, he mourned deeply as at the slaughter of his own kindered." (B.V.5).[132] With a desire to reach perfect clearness with his mind, he sits at the root of a Jambu tree and "reflects on the origin and destruction of creation." (B.V.9) and "enters into the first trance of calmness, which is accompanied by gross and subtle cogitation and which is supermundane in quality"

129 Rockhill, *Buddha*, p. 23.

130 *Divya.* p. 391.

131 *B.III* (1-25) first visit to the forest, met an old man.
*B.III* 39 second visit to the forest, met a diseased man.
*B.III* 51 third visit to the forest, saw a corpse.
*B IV* 65 this visit is taken by force to the grove crowded with women and rejects them.
*B V* 1-2, goes to the forest—ploughing scene and on return journey Kissa Gautami's incident.

132 स्वजनस्येव वधे भृशंशुशोच (B.V. 5)

(B.V.10).[133] Obtaining the concentration of mind "which yields extreme ecstasy and bliss, and perceiving in his mind the course of the world, he meditates on the same matter (B.V.II). Thus thinking, he gains correct insight into the evils of disease, old age and death (B V. 14). He, in this state of mind, felt no longing for sensual pleasures and no hatred or contempt for others. (B.V.15). At this moment there comes a mendicant (pravrājaka) unseen by others, who, being asked tells Siddhārtha that he in fear of birth and death has left the home life for the sake of salvation (B.V.16-17).[134] This further strengthens his resolution to make an end of old age and death. He returns home with his mind fixed on the forest life (B.V.32).

Nidānakatha gives "supernatural and incredible matter."[135] Lalitavistara and Mahavastu elaborate on miracles. But Aśvaghoṣa's plouging scene in *Buddha-carita* emphasises more on the effect of the scene on the alredy peace-seeking, tender and philosophic mind of young Siddhārtha. It arouses compassion, which is more psychological and philosophic. His mind is set to find out the cause of the origin and destruction of creation" (B.V.9 ff).

The effect of this scene on the mind was so great that it left permanent impact upon him. He remained unsatiated, though he learnt the Sanikhya philosophy from sage Udraka and sage Arāḍa. He was in search of liberation of Nirvāṇa or final release from 'Birth and Death Circle'. In his words in B (XII. 101),[136] "All these philosophies are not the way of life for passionlessness, for enlightenment and for liberation. The sure procedure is which I won that time under the Jambu Tree".

**Marriage**

Tradition does not record Siddhārtha's interest in family life. His mind is narrated as always longing for peaceful bliss, which could only be attained with renunciation.

He was married in the 19th year to his own cousin Yaśodhara.[137]

Nidānakatha (R. Davids. pp. 165 ff) does not refer to any marriage ceremony of Siddhārtha. But after telling about the three mansions provided to him with

133 जगत प्रभवव्ययौ विचिन्वमनसश्च स्थितिमार्गमालाम्वे ।। (B. V. 9)
सवितर्क विचारमाप शान्तं प्रथमं घ्यानमनास्रव प्रकारम ।। (Ibid 10)

134 May be here the allusion is to Parivrajaka sect of Brahmaṇism, which was a contemporary sect with Sañjayin as its leader.
नरपुङ्गव: जन्ममृत्युभीत: श्रमण् प्राविजतोस्मि मोक्षहेतो: ।। (B. V. 17)

135 *Nidanakatha*, Prof N.K. Bhagat, p. IX.

136 नायं धर्मो विरागाय न वोधाय न मुक्तये ।
जम्वूमूले मया प्राप्तो यस्तदा विधिध्रुवं: ।। B. XII. 101

137 *HOS*, Vol. 28. p. 2.
Infra *Bodhisattva's wife*.

dancing girls, tells Rahulamātā (Rahula's mother) was his chief queen. Then it procceds with the story of the feats with the bow, displayed in public, by Siddhārtha. They are not to prove his fitness for the marriage but only to display his skill in case there is a war.

This simple story and reference to Siddhārtha's marriage is in contrast with the Sanskrit legend.

The story of Siddhārtha's[138] marriage is discussed in LV, Mahavastu, and Tibetan sources. The marriage is also mentioned by Aśvaghoṣa.

In LV (XII ch) Śuddhodana wants to bind the mind of Siddhārtha and see him married. He sends purohita (priest) to search a suitable match for his son in all the houses in Kapilvastu. Ultimately they bring the news that there is a girl suitable for Sarvārthasiddha.[139]

The king wants to know his son's choice. A function was arranged where the young prince is to distribute the ornaments to the beautiful girls of Kapilvastu and adjoining areas. When all the ornaments were distributed, Gopa the daughter of Dandapani Śakya makes her appearances in a bashful (hriyayanti) manner. Siddhārtha sets his eyes on the charming lady, but there was no ornament left to give her. She, with a smile, expresses her demand. Then at once Kumara gives her his finger-ring, worth a hundred thousand pieces.

When the news reached 'Śuddhodana' about the selection of Gopa by his son, he asked Dandapani for her hand. But Dandapani wanted to test the skill of Siddhārtha in various arts and lipis before he could make final decision. Then follows a long list of lipis known to the would-be Buddha and many miraculous archery feats before she is married-and becomes the daughter-in-law of Śuddhodana.

LV. gives the impression of would-be Buddha having three wives Yaśodhara, Mrigadjā and Utpalavarna.[140] The Chinese legend is that Yaśodhara, Manōdara and Gōtami were the three wives of Siddhārtha.[141]

Mahavastu (II. 70 ff) repeats the story of Siddhārtha's marriage and his selection in an ornament-distribution function. But both the stories (of LV and Mhv) differ. Here also Yaśodhara ( Gopa of LV) appears in the end of the function and there was no ornament left to give her. The prince gives her his costly necklace, which he was wearing and himself shows softness towards her. But Yaśodhara says "Is it all I am worth ?" At this the young prince, laughing, took out his finger-ring which was worth a hundred-thousand pieces and gave it to her. Ultimately they were married.

38 Supra. *The name of Siddhārtha's wife and son.*

139 स खलु पुरोहितो राजानं शुद्धोदनभुपसंक्रम्यैव तमर्थमारोचयति स्मन—
हृष्टवा मया देवकन्या या कुमारस्यानुरूपास्यात् । L. V. p. 99

140 Beal, *R. Legend*, note I. p. 101.

141 *Ibid.*

In Mahavastu, Yaśodhara is the daughter of Mahānāman.[142] Aśvaghoṣa has neither attached much importance to marriage nor has narrated any premarriage or marriage function. He simply in one verse (B.I. 26) tells that the king performed the marriage of Siddhārtha with Yaśodhara. She was of widespread reknown, "virtuous and endowed with beauty and gentle bearing."

In Tibetan sources Sarvārthasiddha expresses in writing his desire and requisite qualities of a woman which he would like to have in his wife. His choice is Gopa, the daughter of a Śākya. He takes Gopa the first, Yaśodhara the second and Ri-lags-skyes (Dear born) as the third wife. But Gopa and Yaśodhara are the same and he had a son from Yaśodhara named Rahula.[143]

Pali texts (Nidānakatha) prefer to call her Rahulamātā, a traditional way of naming the mother. But we get the names of Bimba, Bhadda Kaccāna and Subhaddaka also in Pali works.[144] Dr Malalaśekra (DPPN. II p. 742) suggests that Bimba may be her personal name "other names being descriptive epithets, applied to her, which later on became regarded as additional names." The other names seem to be the later innovations.

**Bodhisattva's Wife**

Suppabuddha and Dandapani were brothers and Mahāmāyā and Prajāpati were their wives and sisters (DPPN. II p. 1220). Thus Gopa or Yaśodhara is the daughter of the maternal uncle of Siddhārtha.[145]

In LV (Yaśovati), Mhv, Aśvaghoṣa's Kavyas, Tibetan sources and Bigandet (p. 36), Yaśodhara is the mother of Rahula. This seems to be wider if not the oldest tradition. Would be Buddha's marriage was celebrated thrice or many more times, is not mentioned in Pali tradition. So the question of his having more than one wife (Yaśodhara) does not rise.

Thus Siddhārtha had only one wife Yaśodhara, who was the mother of Rahula.

142 "In Sanskrit Texts Dandapani is the brother of Suppa-Buddha, *Hardy Manual* p. 137. The latter is the father of Māyā in some N. Sources; but in Mhv. I. 356. Māyā is the daughter of Subhuti. cf. R. Davids B. p. 52.

143 Rockhill *Buddha*, p. 20
*Asiat Res.* XX p. 290
Cf. *Beal*, R. Legend fln. 1 p. 101
Supra, B's Wife.

144 In the commentaries of two Jatakas (281 & 485), she is called Bimba and Bimbasundari. The comy of Mahapadāna, while giving the list of the wives of the last seven Buddhas also calls her Buddha Queen Bimba. After the birth of Rahula, she is called Rahulamātā. Jinacayita composed in 13th C. in Ceylon calls her at one place Yaśodhara and at another Bimba (V.V. 172, 395).

Siddhārtha, after his marriage with Yaśodhara, spends a life of worldly enjoyments and luxury. He renounces the world at the age of twenty-nine (DN. II. 151).[145]

What made him renounce the world ?

**Four Scenes and Renunciation**

In earlier tradition (AN. 38)[147] Siddhārtha spends all his time in three luxurious palaces and never comes down from them. Though being brought up in great luxury, he admits that he thought of menfolk being subject to old age and decay and it was not seemingly for him. This thought left him bereft of the pride (mada) of youth.

MN (Ariyapariyesanasutta)[148] narrates how the thoughts of old age, sickness and death perturbed and awakened in him the philosophic thinking: "And I too, monks before awakening, while I was still the Bodhisattva, not fully awakened, being liable to birth, because of self, sought what was liable to birth, being liable to ageing because of self, sought what was likewise liable to ageing, being liable to disease because of self—being liable to dying because of self-being liable to sorrow because of self-being liable to stain because of self, sought what was likewise liable to stain. Then it occurred to me, monks 'why do I liable to birth because of self, seek what is likewise, liable to birth, being liable to ageing-being liable to stain because of self, seek what is likewise liable to stain. Suppose that I (although) being liable to birth because of self, having known the peril in what is likewise liable to birth, should seek the unborn, the uttermost security from the bonds—nibbāṇa ?—" (Repeated about age, death, stain (impurity) etc.

Thus the actual sight of old, sick and deadman are not found in AN and MN but only the thoughts of these stages in the life of a man, when he thinks of himself passing through them perturb him. All pride (mada) of youth leaves him and his mind is set in finding a wayout.

In *Nidānakatha* (R. Davids, p. 166 ff), Siddhārtha, who was immersed in pleasures of life, the gods decided to awaken him. So one day Siddhārtha, wishing to go to his pleasure-grove, ascends the chariot. Devas show him an old man with decayed teeth, grey hair and trembling body. Only he and the charioteer could see him. Being questioned, the charioteer tells (to the would-be Buddha), that old age is the lot of everyone born. This perturbs him so much that he returns home.

Second time, the Devas bring forth a sickman and at the third time a deadman. The replies of the charioteer 'that is the lot of everyone born' again bring Siddhārtha back to his home and palace.

145 The Pali tradition maintains that Suppabuddha's wife was Amita, Suddhodana's sister (T. Rahula, *Mhv. Study*, fln. 312 p. 398).

146 *Dialogue*, pp 167.

147 *Gradual* I. p 128-9.

148 *MN I.* 163 (p. 207).

Fourth time again the future Buddha, goes to the pleasure ground and sees a recluse and asks the charioteer as to who the man was? The charioteer had no knowledge of recluse, but inspired by the Devas, he tells that he was a recluse and describes the advantages of renouncing the world. Now cherishing the world he goes to the pleasure grove. Here he is dressed up in splendour for the last time. At this time, Śuddhodana, coming to know that a son is born to 'Rahulamātā', sends the message for joy to his son. But hearing this, the future Buddha says, "An mpediment—A bond has come into being." Listening this, Śuddhodana named his grandson Rahula (impediment).

In Dīgha Nikaya,[149] these four scenes of old, sick, dead and pravrājika are also narrated in four different gates (to the E.S.W.N.) of Kapilvastu. Gopa dreams of various untoward incidents (e.g. the trembling of Meru Parvatarаja (verse 25), scattered ornaments (v. 24) etc. which of course indicate and forecast her plight after Siddhārtha's flight.[150] Here king Śuddhodana (XIV p. 135) dreams that his son, in saffron clothes, surroudned by devas, was renouncing peacefully. Mahavastu (II. 130-40) also tells about such dreams of Śuddhodana and Yaśodhara.

Mahavastu preserves all previous legends. In the first instance (Mhv. II7, p. 113 ff) Buddha tells the monks, "—while I was thus delicately brought up the thought occurred to me. Now this life at home is too full of hinderances. The way of religious life is in the open air. It is not possible for one, living at home, to live the holy life, that is utterly bright, blameless, pure and clean. Let me now go away from home into the homeless state." Then he leaves the home.

Here no philosophy of escape from birth and death circle is narrated, only simply a basic fact—that renunciation, while living at home, is difficult or not possible, is emphasised.

Repeating the great renunciation, Śuddhodana, who had provided all the possible luxuries of life to his son, seeing that his son was thinking about the 'rose-apple tree's shade', provided him with more comforts and luxurious attractions, so that he could not leave the home. But that also did not deter the prince. Now the father asks his son the cause of his affliction. He replies, "Yes father, I do see affliction of the body. Disease close upon health and death upon life. And father! I consider, an old man as but another deadman (jiraṇaṁ mṛtāntraṁ).[151] Death comes on father, it is this affliction of the physical body that I see. Yes father! I see the decay of wealth. Everything is empty, void, vain, deceptive and false——." Mhv. II 145 pp. 140-1).

149 *Dialogue* (II. 22-29) pp. 18-22.

150 In Pali, Bodhisattva's wife is identified with a nun, who attains arhatship. Here Bodhisattva interprets one of her dreams, meaning that she will be reborn as a man in her next existence (E.J. Thomas, *L. of B.* p. 56).

151 "Old age has death as its end" (J.J. Jones. *Mhv. II* fln. 4 p. 140).

This tradition tells that the thoughts of old age, sickness and death were original in Siddhārtha and were not caused by "four scenes" (oldman, sickman, deadman and an ascetic).

Further, in Mhv. (II 150; p. 145 ff), the four scenes are depicted in four different visits. The wanderer who meets Siddhārtha in the fourth visit replies to the query, "O prince, I became a wanderer for the sake of winning self-coutrol, calm and utter release" (p. 152). This brought praise from the future Buddha.

Thus in Mahavastu also, as in AN & MN, the four scenes are not original but later addition.

In *Buddhacarita* the 'four scenes' are witnessed by future Buddha in four trips to the forest-gardens. In the first he saw an oldman (B. III. 28), then diseased (B III 40) and then a corpse (third 54), After first two of these excursions, he returns home. In the III excursion, though he wants to return, the charioteer does not return the chariot and in accordance with king's command, takes him to Nandanavana, which is filled with women (B III 62-65). The whole of chapter IV deals with the display of women's amorous feelings, gesticulation etc. to attract and win over the young Siddhārtha. But all efforts fail.

Fouth time again Siddhārtha goes to the forest-grove with his friends (minister's sons), riding on Kanthaka. Here he witnesses the 'ploughing scene' and had his first trance under the Jambu tree Then there comes a Śrāmaṇa. Being asked, he tells: "Since the world is subject to destruction, I desire salvation and seek the blessed incorruptible stage. I look with equal mind on kinsman and stranger, and longing for hatred for object of sense have passed from me" (B.V. 18). "I dwell wherever I happen to be, at the root of a tree or in a deserted temple, or on a hill or in the forest, and I wander without ties or expectations, in search of the highest good, accepting any alms I receive" (B.V. 19).

Siddhārtha returned this time, with a resolve to end birth, old age and death and with his mind fixed on the forest life (B.V. 23).

In Tibetan sources[152] the 'four scenes, are related in four visits to the pleasure-garden.

Thus all the above mentioned sources speak of four visits and four scenes. Nidānakatha (p. 168) tells that the repeaters of the DN, say that all the four omens were seen by Siddhārtha on the same day.[153]

152 Rockhill, *Buddha*, p. 22 ff.
*Asiat. Res.* XX. p. 291 ff.

153 "The members of the Buddhist order of almsmen (Bhikkhus) were in the habit of selecting some book or books of the Buddhist scriptures' which it was their special duty to learn by heart, repeat to their pupils, study, expound, and preach from. Thus the Dīgha Nikaya or collection of long treatises, had a special school of 'repeaters' (bhanaka) to itself.' (*Nidānakatha*, fin. I.p. 168). J.G. Jennings, *Vedantic Buddhism*, p. 10.

The accounts of self-awakened thoughts of birth, life, old age, sickness, death etc. found in the canonical texts, including of Sallasutta (M. Vaega) and Buddha-vaṁśa (8), is the older tradition. In the later tradition these thoughts appear to have been transformed in to the sights of oldman, sickman and deadman. In the words of E.J. Thomas.[154] "In these accounts, we have no historical circumstances mentioned, nor any trace of the events of the legend, as we find in the commentaries and later works. These have elaborated a story, the different forms of which have so many contradictory details, that they appear as independent inventions, based upon the abstract statements of the earlier texts."

**Immediate Causes of Siddhartha's Flight :**

**Kissa Gautami incident**

When Siddhārtha enters the city from his last trip to pleasure-grove, "Kissa Gautami" a maiden of warrior caste cries out, "Happy the mother, the wife of such as he". The future Buddha thinks "She says the heart is thus made happy (Nibbāyati). Now what must be extinguished (Nibbuta) that the heart may be happy (Nibbuta)" ? Then the answer comes to him, "When the fire of lust, hatred and delusion is extinguished (Nibbuta), then only is the heart happy."[155]

Siddhārtha thinks she has taught me a good lesson. I have been searching happiness (peace). So this very day, I shall renounce the world and go-forth to seek Nirvāṇa. Then, as a teacher's fee, he sends the pearl-string, worth a hundred thousand, to Kissa Gautami. With this she feels very happy and thinks that the prince Siddhārtha has fallen in love with her. But he goes to his bedroom in the palace and reclines on a couch.[156]

The story of Kissa Gautami in Pali tradition is also mentioned in Sanskrit tradition.

In Mahavastu II 157, she is called Mṛgi and is the mother of Ananda. Here, when she sees the future Buddha going out from Kapilvastu in such great glory and splendour, she praises him in verse :

154 E.J. Thomas, *L of B.* p. 52.
*J.G. Jenning*, p. 446.

155 Dhm. Comy (H.O.*S.* Vol. 28) p. 3.
The word for h·ppy is nibbuta, literally meaning extinguished, the state of being extinguished is nibbāṇa, the Pali form of Sanskrit Nirvāṇa."

156 E.J. Thomas, *L of B*, fln. 2, p. 53.
Nirvāṇa here means the lasting state of happiness and peace to be reached by the extinction of the 'first' & 'troubles'. (Nidānakatha, fln. p. 171.) For details please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". Nirvāṇa Ch.

Blessed verily is your mother
and blessed, too, your father.

Blessed also is the woman,
whose husband you will be.[157]

Here too, the word 'Nirvāṇa', Bodhisatta listens with rapt attention. He meditates on it and no fear is left for him.

In Tibetan Sources (Dul-va II^b-II), as Bodhīsattva was returning back to the city, Mrigadja (Ri-dags-skyes), the daughter of Śākya Kalika (Dus-legs), saw him from her window and said—

"Ah Happy is the mother,—father—he
Ah She whose husband he shall be,
That woman has gone beyond sorrow!"

Bodhisattva threw her a valuable necklaces for these beautiful words. When the news reached Śuddodana, he married her to Siddhārtha, seven days before, he left the home. (Rockhill, Buddha pp. 23-4).

The Burmese tradition also repeats Kissa Gautami (Mri gadja) gatha. But she does not become Siddhārtha's wife. (Bigandet, p. 58).

In *Boddhacarita* (V. 16-25) Siddhārtha, in his last ride to the forest-grove, met the ascetic. He was so much impressed "that he gained awareness of dharma and set his mind on the way to leave home."

While returning to the city, a nobleman's daughter enters upon the road, folds her hands and says, "Happy indeed and blessed is that woman, whose husband is such in this world, O large eyed one." (B.V. 24).[158] The world 'Blessed' (nirvṛta) filled him with supreme calm and he "sets his mind on the means of winning final beattitude (B.V. 25).

Aśvaghoṣa has not given the name of the girl. She comes to the road, does not look from the window and says the verse, while saluting Siddhārtha. Siddhārtha takes no notice of her, but her word nirvṛta (Blessed) appeals to him.

**Conclusion**

Since the legend of Kissa Gautami or Mṛgi is found in Pali and Sanskrit tradition, there seems a point in concluding that whatever the name of the girl may be, there must have been, some such incident, which solved the conflict in Bodhisattva'si mind : "what should be his goal ?" That he found in the words 'Nirvṛta or Nirvāṇa'.

157 *Dh. A.I. 85*; Budv. A. 280 (J. J. Jones, *Mhv. II* fln. I. p. 153)
Nirvṛita (Pali Nibbuta) 'Released', is translated blessed *J.J, Jones*, Ibid. ft. 2).

158 सुखिता वत निर्वृता च सा स्त्री पतिरीहृक्ष इहायताक्ष यस्याः ।
इ तितं समुदीक्ष्य राजकन्या प्रविशन्तं पथि साञ्जलिर्जगाद ।। B, V. 24

**The Birth of a Son**

In Pali tradition,[159] when Siddhārtha was about to return, home, after his last trip to the pleasure-grove, Śuddhodana sent a messenger to convey the good news that a son was born to him. But hearing this, the future Buddha says "An impediment (Rāhula) has come into being." When Śuddhodana heard this, he named his grandson as Rāhula. The Boddhisattva, riding on his chariot, enters the town with great magnificance and exceedingly glory.

In Jataka commentaries, Rāhula was seven days old, the night Bodhisattva left home to return after he had become Buddha.[160] In Rāhula sutta (M. Vagga. p. 54) he recommends the life of a recluse to Rāhula.

Buddhavaṁśa, which names Bhaddakacca as the wife of Buddha, also mentions Rāhula as the son of Gautama.[161]

In Mhv. II. 159 (p. 154)[162] Yaśodhara conceived Rāhula at the hour of midnight. This was the night when Siddhārtha renounced the world.

In *Buddhacarita* (II) Rāhula is born to Yaśodhara (II. 46)[163] when Buddha was leading the life of luxury in the palace. The 'four scenes' are witnessed by Siddhārtha after his birth (B. III, IV). Further in B (VIII. 68, IX 28) Rāhula was infant and talked or prattled, when Siddhārtha renounced the world.

B (V 83)[164] further adds that Siddhārtha left Kapilvastu, ignoring his father, who was too much attached with him, his young son, his affectionate people, and his wealth.

In Nidānakatha (R. Davids, p. 173) and in Burmese tradition (Bigandet,

159. *Nidānakatha* (R. Davids), p. 169.
"This incident appears to be an attempt to explain the name Rāhula, but Rāhula does not mean a bond. It is diminitive of Rāhu, the monster who swallows the sun or moon, during an eclipse, and it would be a natural name for a person born at such a time .... personal names derived from stars or constellations are very common. This astronomical explanation of the name is given in Schiefner Tib. Lebensb which says that the moon was eclipsed at Rāhula's birth." E J. Thomas *L. of. B*, fln. I p. 53.
160. The J. Camy ref. here is Simhalese which the author has used for compiling his own work (*Nidānakatha*) fln. 2, p. 173.
161. The tradition has no secure foundation in first four Nikayas but is supported by Vinaya (*J. G. Jennings*, fln. 6, p. 13). This J. Camy's ref. that "Rāhula was seven days old" is not found in other commentaries. So the account may be accepted (H. C. Warren, *B. in Tr.* 405 III 7th issue, p. 62).
162. In Tibetan sources (Rockhill, *Buddha*. p. 24) Rāhulamātā seems to have conceived him seven days before the renouncement.
163. "Yaśodhara bore the son of Śuddhodana's son, Rāhula by name, with the face of Rāhu's adversary" (*B. II.* 46).
164 पितरमभिमुखं सुतं च बालं जनमनु रक्तामनुत्तमां च लक्ष्मीम् ।
कृतमतिरपहाय निष्यंपेक्ष: पिहनगरात्स ततो बिनिर्जगाम् ॥
B, V. 83.

p. 61) Siddhārtha desires to see his son before renouncing the world. But finding the mother with a hand on the infant's head, lest she wakes up and proves a hindrance leaves without seeing the child. He thinks he will see the child when he becomes Buddha.

Thus it is clear that the various accounts differ about the time of Rāhula's birth: viz. (a) he was seven days old when Bodhisattva left home, (b) the mother conceived Rāhula the night he left home and (c) he prattled and talked the night Siddhārtha left; on the face of these contradictions to find out the historical truth, in one of these and reject the others without proper evidence, is rather difficult. One thing can, however, be said with certainty, that one truth is hidden or wrapped up in two lies. However, if Rāhula's birth is accepted before the great renunciation, the conclusion would be a better justification, because it is based on the tender feelings of attachment of an ordinary human being, to his son. The lurking of holding his son in his arms before leaving was rejected by him with difficulty (Nidānakatha p. 173). Thus the resolution to attain Nirvāṇa was greater force, which dominated and ultimately enabled him to leave the palace.

**The Harem and Night-Scene**

After Kissa Gautami's incident, Siddhārtha returns to his palace in state and reclines on a couch. Thereupon women, dressed up attractively, play delightfully on all musical instruments to divert his mind. But he takes no delight in them and falls asleep. The women too, finding him asleep, go to sleep. Bodhisattva, waking up and sitting cross-legged on his couch, sees these women muttering in sleep, gaping and some in disordered dress, while others "plainly revealed as mere horrible occasions of worldly ways" (Nidānakatha p. 171).

This sight made him more and more hateful to sense-desires, to stay in the magnificient apartment, which was as splendid as Sakka's residence, seemed to him like staying in a house that had became the prey of devouring flames.[165] Utterance of an intense feeling broke from him, "It all oppresses me! It is intolerable, and his mind turned ardently to the state of those who had renounced the world. Resolving that very moment for the great renunciation, he rose from his seat and called out "Who is there ?" There came Channa whom he asked to saddle Kanthaka.

Mahavastu (II p. 154 ff) has preserved the above story but in a little different and elaborate description. Here Siddhārtha sees women embracing instruments of music (Vīṇa, Tuṇaka, Vipañcika, Parivādini Ālinga etc.) reclining on each other's bosom or shoulder, saliva trickling from the mouth of some, while other was sprawling her limbs left and right etc. "And when the Bodhisattva saw them one and all lying on the floor in the harem, there arose in him an awareness of

165 Three bhavas Kāmaloka, Rūpaloka and Arūpaloka seemed like house of fire (*Nidānakatha*, fln. I. p. 172).

the burial ground. He rose up from his squatting position and took from the chest the fine clothes of Benaras cloth . . . ." called Chandaka and ordered him to bring his horse Chandaka.

LV (p. 149 ff)[166] gives more disgusting picture of the women in the harem e.g. some had eyes turned-up, some laughing and muttering in sleep, some grinding teeth, some sprawling limbs left and right, others shaking their head etc. This to Bodhisattva gave the impression of burial ground in the palace. He decided to renounce the world, the same moment he saluted all the Buddhas. Thus in Pusyanakṣtra, at midnight he called Chandaka and asked him to bring a horse with fast speed.

The night scene in the harem, which is the immediate cause of Siddhārtha's flight is highly colourful in *Buddhacarita* (V. 41 ff). This love-scene is not only ndispensable for an ornate court poem but has preserved the evolution of the old gāthā in its own style.

The disgust felt at the sight of women lying in different ways and looking loathsome with their uncontrolled movements (B. ch. IV, and V. 63) makes him think that . . . yet men are deceived by dress and ornaments and succumb to passion for them, (B. V. 64). Recognising the difference between the natural form of a woman and the transformation produced in her by sleep (B. V. 65), he resolves to escape that night (B. V. 66) . . . is psychological and natural.[167]

With this thought, he immediately calls Chandaka and asks him to bring Kanthaka and quits Kapilvastu.

It is immaterial that Nikayas do not stress on the night scene. But the Pali tradition do mention it.[168] Whether at night in the palace (B.V.) or on that day (of last journey) in the pleasure-grove (B. IV) Bodhisattva did feel the shallowness of woman's physical beauty. There seems to be some *historicity in the point that* he, instead of finding pleasure in women, found disgust in their physical attractions. He resolved to quit and search Nirvāṇa, which he did shaking the love even of his wife and child Rāhula.

166 काश्चिदूपरिवर्तितनयना: . . . काश्चितप्रलपन्त्य: . . काश्चिदृन्तान् कटकटायन्त: . . . काश्चित्प्रलम्बितबाहव: काश्चिद्विश्विप्रचरणा: काश्चिदुद्घाटितशीर्षा: . . .

167 There seems to be a comparison between the palace-terrace scene (B.V.) with women and Nandanavaṇa scene (B. IV), with the Pravrājika who being afraid of birth and death like Siddhārtha (*S. II* 64 ज्जननमरण भयमभितो विजिधांसु : ।।) leaving home was leading the life of a selfless wanderer in search of highest good *B. V. 19*),

168 In addition to its ref. in Nidānakatha, *M. Vagga* I. 7, I. 2 refers it with ref. to one of his earliest converts Yasa. It seems the legend at the later stage was transferred to the legend of Buddha—who was (as told in M.P. Nibbaṇa Sutta, p. 59) of twenty-nine at that time. (Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 420.)

**Boons demanded before flight**

In between Siddhārtha's return from the pleasure garden and the final flight is the legend of asking boons from his father, who wanted to detain him.

In LV (Ch. XV) Siddhārtha before flight goes to his father and asks of *four boons* which if guaranted, would detain him from leaving the home: If "Old age does not come to me, I retain youth and its flow, I am free from disease and death" (Verses 6, 7). The king replies, "how can I, O son! guarantee these four, which have not spared even the Ṛṣis." Listening this reply, Bodhisattva went to the upper chamber of his palace and lay there restless. . . . called Chandaka and asked him to bring the best and fastest horse. Here Chandaka questions as to where he wanted to go at midnight and tries his best to retain him. But Siddhārtha's resolution was unshakable as Meru (verse 57) as he was quitting in quest of Mokṣa (liberation).

The king takes the assistance of five hundred Śākyan families to dissuade the prince from renouncing the world and with their assistance tightened the security on the outer city gates.

The Legend is preserved in Mhv. II 145 (p. 141 ff). Here king Śuddhodana finds his son afflicted and asks the cause. Being told that the young Siddhārtha was worried about old age, disease and death in self and the fear of an enemy's army in the kingship, the father tries to detain him. Then he asks for eight boons. "Grant me father, these *eight boons* that old age does not overtake my youth, that disease does not take away my life, that I shall not be bereft of your company, that this harem of women like the Apsaras and my numerous kinsfolk do not disappear, that this kingdom and realm experience no reverse or any other evil vicissitude, that those who at my birth were invited to partake of embrosial joy should all have their lusts quelled, and that for me there be an end to birth, old age and death."

In B (V. 27-8) Siddhārtha goes to his father to seek permission to become a mendicant. Śuddhodana tries his best to change his resolve (B. V. 33). Thereby the future Buddha replies that he would refrain provided he is given surety on four points (B.V. 34) (a) death (b) disease (c) old age and (d) disaster in worldly fortune do not overcome him (B. V. 35).

The writers of older literature have given more emphasis in the philosophical utterings of the Teacher and not on his life history. This legend of Boons is found in LV, Mhv, and Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita.* Perhaps because these works give the connected account of Siddhārtha's life. (Though Mhv. & LV add much supernatural element in the Master's biography). There is logic also in supposing that the son and father must have had long discussions over the renunciation problem. The father must have naturally tried to convince his revolting son psychologically, by

conversing him without the comforts and security of palace life. The result is obvious from the very fact that Gautama did leave the home and became a wanderer in quest of Truth.

**Flight**

In Pali tradition (Nidānakatha, R. Davids, p. 172 ff), though knowing the orders of Śuddhodana, Chandaka, realising that his master was going to accomplish the great renunciation, saddled the horse Kanthaka, when brought to the Master, as to the human being so to the horse Boddhisattva said, "Dear Kanṭhaka, do thou bear me over this once tonight, so that I, having become Buddha by thy help, shall bear over the world of men and Devas (ibid p. 173). Then leaping he seated himself on Kanthaka.

In LV (p. 167), Bodhisattva asks Chandaka to bring the swiftest horse as the time to attain the 'Ajara Amara' (deathlessness) state had come. It is said, Devas implored Chandaka to bring Kanthaka in Puśyanakṣtra and Siddhārtha mounted it, otherwise he was reluctant to obey.

With the blessings of the Devas, Bodhisattva set out to achieve his goal of deathlessness. Before moving further he had the last glance at Kapilvastu and vowed that he shall never enter the town, till he had attained the supreme position, free from birth and death.[169]

In Mahavastu (II 156-7), Chandaka tried to change the mind of Siddhārtha and the horse also neighed to express his resistence, when Siddhārtha mounted and left the city, the four chief gods did the service of holding the hoofs of the horses, to make it noiseless.

On his way from Kapilvastu, he looked back towards the city and made this solemn utterance : "Though I were to fall into hell and get poisoned food to eat, I shall not again enter the city before I have won old age and death". Here the writer is not satisfied with repeating the human touch in Bodhisattva and so adds the supernatural element, by adding that the city goddess implored Gautama to give a last glimpse, which he granted (Mhv II 164, p. 159).

In *Buddhacarita* (IV. 71) though Chandaka knew the purport of king's orders, he accepted his master's order and brought Kanthaka. Gautama left Kapilvastu in search of the lasting solution to the problem of life and death. (B. V. 79).

As Bodhisattva left his father's city, he uttered a lion's roar, "I shall not be entering the city named after Kapila, till I have seen the further shore of life and death". (B. V. 84).

169 *LV* (P. L. Vaidya) p. 162. verses 90-91 :
नाहं प्रवेक्षी कपिलस्य पुरं अप्राप्य जातिमरणान्तकरम् ।। 90 ।।
स्थानासनं शयनचंक्रमणं न करिष्यहं कपिलवस्तुमुखम् ।
यावन्नलब्ध वरबोधिमयां, अजरामरं पदवरं ह्यमृतम् ।। 91 ।।

To add miracle to the flight, in the words of the poet, "The good horse suppressed all noises——that might awaken the attendants, his jaws were soundless and he silenced his neighing as he went forth with steady steps (B.V. 80), Yakṣas bore up the hoofs off the ground with the tips of their hands,——which were like lotuses, so that they seemed to be throwing lotuses beneath him". (B. V. 81).

In Nidānakatha (pp. 172-3) Siddhārtha implores Kanthaka to bear him so that with his help, he gains a position over devas. But in *Buddhacarita* the Mahayāna element dominates : Siddhārtha asks Kanthaka to strive with speed and courage, for his good and the good of the world.

In Nidānakatha and Buddhacarita, Chandaka brings the horse without resistence, while in Mahavastu, Chandaka tries to change the mind of his master. But the fact that Siddhārtha left Kapilvastu on his famous stead Kanthaka with his groom Chandaka is common. The vow, never to return to Kapilvastu till he has attained enlightenment, is found in Pali and Sanskrit sources. It appears to have some authenticity because of : (a) the natural desire to see the birth place for the last time (while quitting it forever). (b) The strong resolution of renouncing the world and the statement, that he will never return without attaining Buddhaship, are co-related, (c) and also because no record tells us that he returned to Kapilvastu, before enlightenment.

At this time, Māra came with the intention of stopping him. But Bodhisattva made him know his resolution of becoming a Buddha. Then the temptor thought that now onwards he shall ever watch him for any slip and overpower him.[170]

**City gates**

The city gates were well guarded at night and the king had placed one thousand men at each gate to stop him. Reaching the gate with the help of devas who muffed the sound of Kanthaka's neighing so that none could hear it, and placed their hands under its feet to stop any noise, Boddhisattva thought of jumping over the city rampart eighteen cubits high. But the devas residing at the gate opened it.

In Mhv. (II. pp 156-7) the gate was opened by Supratisthita (who was born at the same time as Chandaka) a Yakṣa, with the help of 500 followers.

In LV (p. 159) the credit of opening the gate goes to celestial powers.

Aśvaghoṣa (B. V. 82), however, tells us that the city gates, which had heavy bars, opened noiselessly, of their own accord, as Siddhārtha passed alone. Here also, like LV, the divine ordering is inferred.

In Nidānakatha (pp. 174-5) the city-gate was opened by the god that dwelt there.

170 *Nidānakatha*, R. Davids, pp. 174-75.
Infra. Māra Legend. This is the first recorded temptation of Māra . . E.J. Thomas, *L of B*, p. 55.

Undermining the miraculous element, let us admit the fact that Siddhārtha had no difficulty in going out of Kapilvastu. The city gate was somehow opened for him, inspite of his father's strict orders.

**Last Look**

Thus Bodhisattva left Kapilvastu on the full moon day of Āsālhi, "When the moon was in uttarāsātha lunar mansion (i.e. on the first July)". When he left the city, he desired to look back upon it. The moment he had this desire the broad earth revolved like a potter's wheel" and stayed : saying as it were to him. "O Great man, there is no need to stop in order to fulfill your wish". So he gazed at the city. That spot is the shrine of Kanthaka's staying. Thus proceeded the Bodhisattva, and passing beyond three kingdoms, that night, he reached the bank of river Anoma.[171]

**Flight Scene in Art**

No IV A.2. in Madras Museum, displays fragment of a pillar depicting the miracle under Jambu tree. The upper penal displays dwarfs carrying the hoofs of a a horse.[172]

## BODDHISATTVA, A MONK

**Hair**

In Ariyaparisena Sutta (MN.I. 163. p 237) Buddha narrates to his monks that he, leaving his wailing parents, having cut off his hair and putting on yellow robes, went from his home into the homeless state.

In this description here one gets the impression that the hair were cut and the clothes were changed at home, and not on the banks of river Anoma, as described in Nidānakatha. LV & Mhv. etc. as such which looks to be a later addition.

In Nidānakatha (R. Davids, p. 177 ff), Bodhisattva stops on the other side of river Anoma. He wants Channa to return but the latter is reluctant and wanted to return with his master. Ultimately Channa, though had refused thrice, had to obey his master. Then he cut his beard and tresses with the sword to two inches in length. The beard and the hair remained the same till he lived as there was no need to shave.

Adding miraculous element, Nidānakatha further records that Bodhisattva, saying to himself : If I am to become a Buddha let it stand in the air, if not, let it fall on the ground," threw the hair and diadem together in the air. They went a league high and were received in a jewelled casket by Sakka, the deva king. He placed them in the Tavatimisa, in the Dagoba of Diadem.

Then he thought of changing his Benaras-clothes with that of an ascetic. Brahma

171 *Nidānakatha* (Ibid) p. 175 ff.
For Siddhārtha's route-please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". The three kingdoms are Sākyas, Koliyas and Mallas.

172 *Bulletin*, Madras Govt. Museum; 1956 p. 249.

Ghatikāra, who has been his friend in the time of Kassapa Buddha, provided him with "The three robes and the alms, bowl, razor, needle, girdle and a water strainer." These eight are the wealth of a monk-devotee.

Bodhisattva, adopting the sacred garb of renunciation, with assurance of his safety, and a message to his parents, dismissed Channa. Channa paid his homage and departed with a heavy heart.

Channa died soon after he lost sight of his master and returned weeping to Kapilvastu.

**Kanthaka**

In Nidānakatha, Burmese tradition (Gaudama p. 67) Kanthaka, the horse, dies broken-hearted, soon after he parted from his master. The death and deification of Kanthaka is more elaborately described in Mhv. (II. 189 ff. p. 182 ff). But in LV, Mhv, *Buddhacarita* and Tibetan sources (Rockhill Buddha, p. 25) Kanthaka returns to Kapilvastu.

Mhv. II. 190 (p. 183) tells that Kanthaka, after his return to Kapilvastu, shed tears day and night and did not eat any fodder. He starved grieving for Bodhisattva and died because he could not see him.

After his death, the horse was born in heaven where Mahamaudgalyana saw him in the world of devas. (ibid)

In Mhv. (II. 166 p. 161) Kanthaka, at the time of departure, licked the feet of Gautama, but he did not pay any heed and went his way.

In *Buddhacarita* (B. VI 54. 55). Gautama is depicted as more humane and full of the milk of human sympathy. He loves the horse, talks to him, as to man, who understands him and pats him before parting or bidding farewell. Kanthaka, on hearing his master's words, licks his feet with his tongue and drops tears.

This parting scene in Aśvaghoṣa's description is depicted in Gandhāra art and is lying in Los Angeles county Museum' of Art, Los Angeles (fig. 122, R. Parmoo's book L of B in Indian sculpture).

**Hair**

Preserving the Legend, Aśvaghoṣa (1-2 c AD) records : "He unsheathed his sword and cut off his headdress with the hair enclosed in it and tossed it, with the muslin trailing behind, into the air. (B. VI. 57). The inhabitants of heaven caught it reverently, with the intention of worshipping it. This divine host paid it due adoration in heaven with celestial honours," (ibid 58).

This agrees with LV (p. 164) but in Mhv. (III 179, 786) Upali performs this service (of hair-cutting) to Buddha as a barbar.

In Mhv. (II 161 & fln. 10) the tuft is taken by Śakra the lord of devas. It

received worship in Tryaṣtrimśa, where cuda festival is observed. In LV (p 164) it was taken by devas (when thrown in the sky) for worshipping. There a chaitya, named "Cudaprati Grahaṇa" was established.[173] This agrees with Tibetan sources (Rockhill, Buddha, p. 25).

**Clothes**

The Pali (Nidānakatha verse 273) Tibetan (Rockhill, Buddha p. 25 ff, Asiat Res. XX 290 ff) and Sanskrit (Mhv. II p. 186, LV. p. 164 and B. VI 60 3); all sources record the discarding of clothes, ornaments and head-dress.

In Nidānakatha,[174] as described earlier, Bramha Ghaṭikara, a friend of Bodhisattva in the time of Kassapa Buddha, provided him the three robes in the guise of a monk.

In Tibetan sources (Rockhill, Buddha, p. 26), Cataketu, in the garb of an ascetic, assuming the role of a hunter, exchanged clothes with Bodhisattva and carried them off to the Trayaṣtriṃcat heaven. Here the faithful Brahmaṇas and householders built a stupa.

In Mahavastu, the hunter was the creation of Suddhāvasa gods.

In LV,[175] the account differs in the end. Here the clothes are taken to Devaloka for worship and a chaitya is constructed there, known uptill today as Kāṣāyagrahṇa.

In *Buddhacarita* (VI 60-63), when he desires to discard costly clothes and have ascetic's dress, there appears an ascetic in the garb of a hunter's dress. He appears before Bhodhisattva in the ochre coloured clothes (B. VI. 60) and offers to exchange hermits dress with silk clothes. This Siddhārtha accepts with cheer. After exchanging the dress, the being again goes to heaven in white-clothes (B. VI. 63).

However, there is no mention of clothes being taken to Devaloka and a chaitya being constructed over them.

To sum up historically viewed, it is logical to believe that Siddhārtha did change royal dress with ascetic's robe, whether at home or in the jungle is immaterial. The construction of chaitya in Devaloka to worship the discarded dress, is a later legend, which the devotees seem to have added simply as a mark of their reverence.

**Evidence in Art**

G. 259 fig. 8 in Lucknow depicts the turban worshipping scene in Gandhāra art.[176]

173 *LV* (P. L. Vaidya) p. 164.
तत्रापि चैत्यं स्थापितभूत । अद्यापि तच्च-चूड़ाप्रति गृहणमित्यवे ज्ञायते ।

174 *Nidānakatha* (R. Davids, verse 273, p. 178).

175 *LV*. (P. L. Vaidya, p. 164).
देवलोलोकमगतम् तेषाँ पूजार्थम् तच्छन्दकेन दृष्ठमभूत हृष्टम भूत। तत्रापि चैत्यं स्थापितं ।
अद्यापि तचैत्यं काषाय गृहणमित्येव ज्ञायपे ।
Cf. Romantic Legend of Buddha, p. 144.

176 *Catalogue*. Lucknow Museum, p. 19.

"The base relief from Bhārut depicts the scene of 'feast of the hair' being celebrated, by the thirty-three, in honour of the Bodhisattva's shorn locks. Here the entire head-dress is shown inside the sanctuary. Later, worshippers were not satisfied to have the master's hair cut so unceremoniously and with such an inapproriate instrument. The Order, wishing that their founder had at once assumed the true appearance of the future members of his Order, arranged for a god disguised as a barbar, to appear in the jungle at the right moment and shave the Bodhisattva's head in proper manlike fashion."[177]

**Search for Truth**

In Ariyapariyesanasutta (MNI 165. p 209, Buddha himself says, regarding the philosophy taught to him by the first teacher Ālara Kalama, "......Ālara Kalama being my teacher, set me-the pupil-on the same level as himself and honoured me with the highest honour. Then it occured to me, monks ; 'This 'dhamma' does not conduce to disregard nor to disposition, nor to stopping, nor to tranquality, nor to super-knowledge, nor to awakening, nor to Nibbāna, but only as far as reaching the plane of no—thing. So I, monks! not getting enough, turned away from 'dhamma''.

Then, searching for a matchless path, he approached Uddaka, Rama's son. He taught or proclaimed the plane of "neither perception nor non-perception". Buddha was not satisfied, so he disregarded and turned away from this 'dhamma'. Then (MN. 167), searching for incomparable path to peace, walking on tour, through Magadha, in due course he arrived at Uruvela, the camp township. There, finding a lovely woodland grove and clear flowing Nairanjna river, and a village to support nearby, set on striving to attain Nirvāṇa and after six year's most rigid penance-"won the security from the bonds-Nibbāna."[178]

Here Bodhisattva meets Ālāra Kalama first and then Udraka. There in no mention of his meeting with king Bimbasara.

The legend of Gautama's meeting with Bimbasara is not found in MN, but found is later works. It is derived from Sutta Nipāta's Pahbaggasutta (SBE X). The king first sees him from his palace window and then sends his messangers to know about this Bhikṣu's whereabouts. Coming to know he goes to Pandava mountain, where he had taken seat. King Bimbasara tries to change the mind of Siddhārtha and offers him "The Army-house and the headship of assembly of chiefs." But is refused with the words, "Seeing misery in sensual pleasures and considering the forsaking of the world is happiness, I will go and exert myself. In this my mind delights."

177 Foucher, L of B, p. 87).

178 For details about 'Nirvāṇa', please see Nirvāṇa ch. in my work. *Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*" for Enlightenment and realisation of Truth, cf. Mahasihanāda sutta (*MN.* I. 12, p. 91 ff),
For torturing penances (*ibid.* p. 107 ff).

This simple narration in a more developed form is found in LV, Mhv. Buddhacarita, Tibetan records. etc.

**Rajagrha to Nairanjna**

Nidānakatha,[179] which records Pali tradition, tells that after refusing the offer of king Bimbasara of Rajagṛha, and making a promise to first return to his kingdom, after becoming Buddha, he journeys further, in quest of peace. He visits several hermits, including sage Ārāda Kalama and Uddaka (Udraka) and acquires their systems of ecstatic trance. Being unsatisfied, he leaves these sages and goes to Uruvelva. Here he meets the five ascetics[180] who served him, while he was "carrying out the great struggle," for six years.

The severest austerities of starvation left him very weak. One day, while performing intense meditation, he was overcome by severe pain, fainted and fell down. Realising the value of strength to achieve enlightenment, and futility of self-torture and starvation he resolved to eat.

On the full moon day, in the month of May, Sujata, the daughter of a 'senani of Uruvelva, taking Bodhisattva for a true-deva, offered rice-milk (kṣīr) in a golden vessal. That was the only food, which he took in forty-nine days.

At that time, a grass-cutter, named Sottiya, came from the opposite direction and offered eight bundles of grass to Bodhisattva. Finding a steadfast spot ; he scattered the grass, with a resolution not to leave the seat till he attained enlightenment (Nidānakatha, R. Davids, pp 187-90).[181]

Here, Māra, thinking "Siddhārtha wants to free himself from my dominion. I'll not let him get free yet," approaches him, but is defeated.[182]

Here, meditating under the Bo-tree, Siddhārtha became Buddha, *i.e.* he attained enlightenment. There came the end of his cravings or he achieved Nirvaṇā.[183]

This Pali traditional account is repeated in Sanskrit records, with little variations.

179 Dr Tiwari Ed. p. 167 ff.
*Tr*. R. Davids, p. 179 ff.

180 They are first mentioned as 'Panca Bhikku in the canon who leave Gautama, when he leaves physical austerities. Later on, they are known as 'Pancavaggiyathera' i.e. elders of the series of five. From Jātakas, we know that the youngest was one of the eight sign-readers who prophesied correctly at Gautama's birth. By the time, Siddhārtha became Buddha seven of them died. Buddha called on their sons and asked them to go with him, only four agreed. In *LV.* they are Uddaka's pupil. When Gautama rejected Udraka they went with him to Rajagṛha.

In Tibetan accounts Śuddhodana had sent 300 men to attend to his son at sage Udraka's Aśrama. (Rockhill, *Buddha*, p. 28). Thus the accounts differ.

181 Cf. *B* XII 120.

182 Infra *Māra Legend*, Ch.

183 For details please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*".

**Sanskrit Tradition**

In LV (ch XVI p. 174 ff), Bodhisattva first visits the hermitage of Śākya Brahmaṇa and then Padama and Raveta. Then he goes to Vaiśāli, where he meets Sage Ārāḍa. Leaving Vaiśāli, he goes to Magadha, where king Bimbasara meets him. Near Rajagṛha (the great city of Magadha) lived Rudraka Ramaputra (LV. Ch. XVII p. 180 ff). He taught the future Buddha the attainment of psychic state, where there is no longer 'Conciousness nor unconsciousness.[184]

Here the king of Magadha offers wealth, women etc. and requests Bodhisattva to stay in his kingdom and drop the idea of renunciation.

Then follows the traditional story of the refusal by Bodhisattva and the promise to return to him after enlightenment.

Here Bodhisattva meets and visits the hermitage of Śākya Brahmaṇa, Padama, Raveta, (then Bimbasara), sage Ārāda and Udraka respectively.

Then follows the traditional story of severe penance for six years on the banks of river Nairanjna and the ultimate triumph over Māra and the attainment of enlightenment (LV. ch XX ff).

In Mahavastu (II pp 186, 189, 190 1, 197-8), Siddhārtha honours seer Vasiṣtha of his clan with his first visit (195). Then he goes to Vaiśāli and attaches himself to Ārāda Kalama, the Saṁkhya hero (198). While passing through Magadha, king Śreniya (Bimbasara) came to see him (199) and made an offer of his kingdom, with army of cavalry. The same was refused and a promise by the king was extracted to visit the place after enlightenment. After this Bodhisattva met Udraka Ramaputta (200). And then follows the traditional story of Siddhārtha's leaving the place and practicising severest austerities, milk-rice offer by Sujata and ultimate enlightenment.

Here the future Buddha meets respectively Sage Vasiṣta, Ārāda Kalama, king Bimbasara and then sage Udraka.

In *Buddhacarita*, Bodhisattva, after dismissing Chandaka and Channa, visits the hermitage of sage Bhārgava (B. VIII. 1, 10). Here he meets Brahmana ascetics, who were performing various body-torturing practices to gain paradise or wordly gains (B. VIII 11-34). Being dissatisfied and advised by one Bhasamśāyin (dust rolling) ascetic, he goes towards Vindhyakoṣa. to see sage Ārāda (B. VIII 51, 59). On his way he passes through Rajagṛha, where meets him king Bimbasara. Here the poet has gone too far in displaying the maturity in the prince. He advises the king in the end "To rule the earth, obtain long life, protect the sons of the good and the Aryas and enter the glories of sovereignty" (B. XI 70).

After the traditional promise to visit the capital, when he becomes Buddha (XI 721), Gautama sets for Vaisvamitra's hermitage (Bi XI 73). Then he goes to

184 नैवसंज्ञानासंज्ञायतन समापत्ते मार्गः (*LV.* P.L. Vaidya, p. 180).

Raveta is identified by T. Rāhula (*in Mhv. Study* p. 247) with Sage Bhargavā.

sage Ārāḍa (ch. XIII), who explains Saṁkhya philosophy ; then to sage Udraka (B XII 84) and then to the royal seer of Gaya in the hermitage of Nagari by name (B XII. 91). Being dissatisfied, he takes his dwelling on the banks of river Nairanjna. Then follows the traditional story of five mendicants serving him for six years, seven penances, ultimate realisation of the futility of starvation and self-torture, and taking of first food of cooked milk and rice from Sujata, taking his seat under the "pippal tree" (B XIII 115), fight with Māra and ultimate enlightenment.

In *Buddhacarita*, Siddhārtha first meets Bhārgava Ṛṣi and then king Bimbasara, Udraka and then royal seer of Gaya's Nagari hermitage.

In Tibetan records (Rockhill) Buddha (p. 27 ff), after dispersing Chandaka, Siddhārtha goes first to the hermitage of Bhṛgu, then meets king Bimbasara, then goes to sage Ārāḍa Kalama (Rgyu-stsul-shes-kyi-pu-ring-du-hphur) and then to sage Udraka.

In these records, instead of traditional story of accepting milk and rice from Sujata, he takes fresh cow's milk, who had just calved (ibid. fln. 2 p. 29).

In Burmese tradition (Bigandet p. 70 ff), Ālāra Kalama explains four 'dhyānas' to Gautama and refers for the fifth to sage Udraka. Being unsatisfied, he resolves to devote himself to meditation on the instability and nothingness of all that exists. He goes to Uruvelva, where five mendicants join him and then follows the traditional story of severest austerities for six years and ultimate triumph.

**Historical View**

Siddhārtha in his search for truth, on the way from Kapilvastu to Nairanjna river, meets many contemporary ascetics and philosophers. The most popular legend is of his meetings with sage Ārāḍa and Udraka. The Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Burmese records, all mention the evolution of this legend. All these sources agree on the point, that Siddhārtha's quest could not be satiated by these philosophers, who taught the theory of soul, while he was in search of freedom from death and birth (Nibbāna). So he leaves them and performs severest austerities of body-torture and starvation continously for six long years. Ultimately, he realises that Nibbāna, the freedom, the supreme bliss, lies in peace, is free from passions and desires, and is selfless. He realises that "Birth to Death" is inter-dependent by cause dependent (Paticcasamyupada),[185] Without going into argument, about the order of preference in meeting different sages,[186] Siddhārtha's learning of Saṁkhya philosophy from sage Ārāda can be safely said as a historical fact.

**Meeting with Bimbasara**

The tradition of Bodhisattva's meeting with Bimbasara, his offer of the kingdom

185 For details please see my "*Aśhaghoṣa and His Times*".

186 The scholars do not agree with Siddhārtha meeting with sage Bhargava, which they think is a later interpolation.

of pleasures, former's rejection of the same, saying that he has renounced all for the sake of attaining supreme enlightenment, is derived from Pali (Sn, Nidānakatha), Sanskrit (LV, Mhv. Buddhacarita), Tibetan sources (Asiat Res. XX p. 291, Rockhill, Buddha pp 267) and Burmese Legend (Gaudama p. 67).[187]

But the chronicles of Ceylon are not aware of the legend of Bimbasara in the Mañjuśri Mulakalpa.[188]

The four Nikayas do not mention any such meeting between the two. (J.G. Jennings, fln, 4 p. 18).

**Conclusion**

The legend of Siddhārtha's meeting with Bimbasara before enlightenment has a very little historical value in it. A Foucher (L of B p. 95) is of the opinion that "the most credible tradition places the meeting between the two after his enlightenment. The mention of the meeting before that must have been done by the later writers, in view of the impossibility. How Siddhārtha could pass through Magadha unnoticed by the police, population and the king ? So the addition, that the king himself took the initiative and called upon the future Buddha. "We have particular reason not to show ourselves more recalcitrant than our sources."

"What these later writers wished us to note, was that the king himself was tempting the ascetic by his enticing offers and trying to deter him from following the way of enlightenment. If he was not really one of Māra's aid, he at least, so to say, assumed such a role. The spontaneous cordial offer therefore becomes a satanic rouse, and Gautama's refusal to be seduced affords the occasion for a long sermon by the theologians on the vanity of worldly pleasures. And thus a charming encounter is lost by the moralising mania of these scholars, which was certainly not shared by popular imagination, when the tale was originally invented." (Ibid p. 96).

In Pabbaggasutta (Sn. 420) L.V. (p. 179.29) and Burmese tradition (Bigandet p. 69), Bimbasara asks the future Buddha his lineage, parentage and home town ? In *Buddhacarita* (X.22) Bimbasara admits that he is a family friend of Siddārtha and knowing his inheritance asks the reason for renouncing the world (B X. 23 ff). But the legend of Bimbasara's meeting is not found in MN. So it can not be said with certainty that this meeting before enlightenment is a historical fact. As Rajgṛha is described enroute to Uruvelva, logically the later writers, appear to have inserted this story to give even more importance to Siddhārtha's resolution. However, Aśvaghoṣa has shown more maturity in analysing the episode and inserting the friendship of both the families, philosophical arguments, and advise Siddārtha, even before enlightenment.

187 B. goes to Ālāṛa Kalama and then to Udaka after leaving Bimbasara. (Gaudama, p. 71).
188 B.C. Law, *Ceylon Chronicles*, p. 59.

**Conflict before Englightenment**

The legend of conflict in the mind of Siddārtha, after enlightenment, to preach or not to preach, the profound and difficult philosophy to masses, bound in the bondage of desire is mentioned in Vinaya (M. Vagga I.5), DN (II 1—40),[189] MN (I. 167-69 pp. 211 ff), SN. I. 137-41, Nidānakatha, Tibetan and Sanskrit tradition.

In Mahavagga (I. 5 ff), when Buddha, after enlightenment, shifted from the foot of the Rajayatana tree to Ajapala banyan tree, being alone, retires in solitude. He thinks, "I have penetrated this doctrine, which is profound, difficult to perceive and to understand, which brings quietude of heart, which is exalted, which is unattainable by reasoning, abstruse, intelligible (only) to the wise......To the people, therefore, who are given to desire, intent upon desire, delighting in desire, the law of causality and the chain of causation, will be a matter difficult for them to understand. Most difficult for then to understand will be, also the extinction of all saṅskaras, the getting rid of all the substrata (of existence), the destruction of desire, the absence of passion, quietude of heart, i.e., Nirvāna ! Now if I proclaim this doctrine, and these men are not able to understand my preaching, this would in turn bring physical weariness and mental annoyance to me." Gautama thought over this matter and became inclined not to preach. Then Brahma Shampati intervened[190] and implored, Buddha to preach his doctrine to those who are keen to attain salvation. Then Buddha, out of compassion towards sentient brings, acceeded to the request.

Five Bhikṣus were converted after this imploration by Brahma Shampati.

In DN II. 36, it is one of the *Great Brahmas* who approaches Vipassi-Buddha and implores Buddha to propound the Truth realised by him to ignorant masses, lest they die from not hearing the Truth. On the other hand, in MN I. 16-68 (p. 211 ff) Buddha himself narrates, how being enlightened, his mind was perplexed, as to preach or not the Dhamma. When his mind was inclined not to teach the Dhamma, then *Brahma Shampati* exhorted him teach the "deathlessness or Nibbāna" to masses, decaying because of the lack of this knowledge. At this entreaty, Buddha, with his divine eye, surveyed the world and changed his mind.

The confession of Buddha's dilemma, as given in Jataka Commentary and Pali tradition (Nidānakatha p. 206 ff), is as follows "———And no sooner was he seated there, considering the depth of the doctrine, which he had gained, then, there arose in his mind a doubt (felt by each of the pre-Buddhas, as he became aware of his having arrived at the doctrine) that he had not that kind of ability, necessary to explain-the doctrine to others......Then the Mahaśampati Brahma, ruler of the heavens appears, and implores 'O Blessed Lord ! do thou proclaim the doctrine——, then the master granted the request."

189 In *DN*. II 1-40 the life of I Buddha Vipassi, one the seven pre-Buddhas, is narrated. It is nothing but the life of Gautama Buddha, in this birth.

190 According to Dhm. A (*HOS*. I p 196) Brahma Shampati accompanied by the thousand and Maha-Brahma reuqested him to preach the Lawto others.

Buddha thought of preaching the doctrine to Ālāra (Ārāḍa) but he was dead. Then he thought of the five mendicants. So, on the full moon day of Āsālhi, he decided going to Benaras.

He went to a hermitage near Benaras[191] on the fixed day, took the seat prepared for him. Surrounded by devas, he taught the five attendent elders, "The Foundation of the kingdom of Righteousness or set rolling the wheel of Norm (Dhamma)."

Thus these were the first five Bhikkus, converted, after Brahma's interference.

This conflict to preach or not to preach the Truth, is also mentioned in Mahavastu, LV (ch XXV) and *Buddhacarita.*

In Mahavastu III 314 ff. p 302 ff), the accounts are compiled from different traditions. Those were elaborated and multiplied, as the time passed. In the first account, Buddha is perplexed in his mind to preach the Dhamma to the masses or not, as it required complete control of the passions and renunciation of worldly life. He ponders and thinks it discreet to remain silent. Here there is no reference about the request of Brahma.

The second account, which also speaks of Buddha's hesitation, is altogether different. Here Brahma rushes to plead to Buddha, to set the wheel of Dhamma in motion. Further, he does not come alone, but brings Śakra, the lord of devas, Suyāma, Suniymita Vaśavartin, the four great kings, the ten Yakṣa lords and the ten Yakṣa chieftains accompanied by several hundred Yakṣas. At the request of Brahma, Śakra, the lord of devas, also pleads with Buddha. But Buddha remains silent. Then, at the request of Śakra, Brahma entreats Buddha. That also has no effect.

Then follows another account, where it is Maha-Brahma who approaches the Exalted one. To him, Buddha replies, that to preach to masses, who are slaves of passions, is like a way up against the stream. Being dissatisfied, Maha-Brahma also leaves.

And then there is yet another tradition according to which Great Brahma, when Buddha is at Uruvelva, knowing about the then arisen wicked and wrong beliefs among the Brahmaṇas and laymen of Magadha, comes to the foot of the Goatherd's Banyan tree, tells Buddha the prevailing conditions and requests him to open the door of immortality and to clean the impure beliefs among masses. Then Buddha, through the insight gained by his enlightenment, realises the need, and acceeds to the request of Maha-Brahma.

After Brahma's interference, as stated earlier, the first converted were five Bhikṣus of Benaras. The tradititon of Maha-Brahma and his huge retinue requesting Buddha to set the wheel of Righteousness in motion, is also found in LV. (ch. XXV). This further agrees on broader lines with Mahavastu, before Buddha acceeds to the

191 Isipatana, the hermitage in the deer park close to Benaras (*N. Katha*, fin I. p. 208).

request of Maha-Brahma[192] to set the wheel of Righteousness in motion.

In *Buddhacarita* the Gatha is narrated in a little different way. Being enlightened, "The Sage who had grasped the principle of causation and was farmly fixed in the system of impersonality, roused himself and filled with great compassion, gazed on the world with his Buddha eye for the sake of its tranquility" (B XIV 95). Moreover, he saw the world lost in false views, vein efforts, passions, "Seeing too the law of salvation, which was exceeding subtle, he set his mind on remaining immobile" (B XIV 96). Then remembering his former promise,[193] he resolved of preaching tranquility. Thereupon he reflected in his mind that there were different men with great or like passion (Ibid. 97).

At this moment, two heavenly chiefs, knowing Sugata's mind and decision, approached him (Ibid. 98) and requested him and appealed to his good sense; "O Sage, having yourself crossed beyond the ocean of existence, rescue the world, which is drowning in suffering"...(Ibid. 101). Some people in this world work to their own advantage. It is hard to find in this world or in heaven, one who will be active for the good of the world (Ibid. 102). "Bestow your excellencies on others" (Ibid. 101).

After saying this, they departed for their celestial sphere from where they had come' As a result, Buddha's decision was changed.

At that time, for the alms-round, the four quarters presented four begging bowls. He turned them in one for the sake of his dhamma (TXIV. 104). The first alms were given by the merchants of a passing caravan. (Ibid. 105).

Since Udraka Ramaputta and Sage Ārāḍa were dead, he turned his attention towards five-ascetics and set towards Benaras (Ibid. 106).

The story of request by Brahma and Śakra or heavenly divinities points to the two sects of the Buddhist Church, according to Foucoer (L of B. p 134) i.e., (1) the monastic order and (2) the lay believers. According to the monks of the monastic order, the Master was hesitant to preach the doctrine, which common people might neither understand nor accept. It was only due to compassion for suffering humanity that he accepted preaching. However, the lay believers, believed that it was due to the request of gods that he changed his mind.

Artists, who always comply with the popular demands, represent, in former case, a throne occupied by Buddha, while in the other case, it is always Bodhisattva, "Whether the compositions are crowded or reduced to two protagonists, it is always Brahma, known by his hair, who occupies the place of honour at the masters left; while "Śakra, the Indra of the gods" is pushed to the other side for the representations had to follow the rules of etiquette." (Ibid p. 135).[193b]

The legend of imploring Buddha to set the wheel of Righteousness in motion, is

192 For Prahma Shampati *L.V.* usually has Sikhi Mahābrahma (pp. 287, 290, 293).
193 Here, promise before his decision to descend from Tuṣita heaven, with devas, is referred.
193b PLATE-III.

found in Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Burmese etc., records, but with little variations here and there.

In DN 362, Chief Brahma implores Buddha (Vipassi) to set the wheel of Righteousness in motion. In Vinaya and Majjhema Nikaya very title of Shampati is given, which seems to be a later gloss.[194] In Nidānakatha, the great ruler of Brahma heavens implores. In Mhv., Brahma, along with Śakra, Sunirmita, Vaśavartin, the Yakṣas etc. implore; in LV (p 287) Sikhi Mahā-Brahma, surrounded by ten thousand Brahmaṇas, then Mahā-Brahma along with Śakra, and then Sikhi Mahā-Brahma (p. 290) implore Buddha to set the wheel of righteousness in motion.

In *Buddhacrita*, two heavenly chiefs (the names are not given) implore Buddha to preach the doctrine realised by him. This shows the evolution of the Gatha. Thus Brahma or Maha-Brahma is the common god to implore Buddha, except in *Buddhacarita*, where only two heavenly beings are described to have requested the Teacher.

All the Pali and Sanskrit (the older) records thus agree that there was struggle in the mind of Buddha to set the wheel of Righteousness[195] in motion or not, Psychologically viewed this was natural because the :

(a) Path discovered by him to attain the highest goal was different from the prevalent one as it was based upon 'Śīla' qualities, rather than on sacrifices or Yajñas.

(b) The restrictions of caste and creed were not there, as everyone could reach the highest stage by following this new path.

(c) His goal was Nirvānā or freedom from birth and death circle, and not the attainment of Svarga (paradise) or fulfillment of desires.

(d) The prevailing philosophers of Brahmaṇas, Jains, Lokayatas, Ājivikas etc. were of a great hinderance etc. (though the later three were hostile to Brahmaṇic cult of rituals).

By introducing the imploration by Brahma and then later on Brahma Shampati or heavenly-Beings, to Buddha to preach the Truth realised the Buddhist inserters have tried to show Buddha's superiority over the highest Brahmaṇic god or Devas.

**Begging Bowl**

After enlightenment, to lead the life of a Bhikṣu, Buddha needed a begging bowl.

According to M. Vagga (1.4),[196] on the last day of the seven weeks (after en-

194 R. Davids, *DN* II 36.2, fln 4 p. 29.
195 Cf. *Dharmacakraparvartana in Literature and Art* by D.B. Pandey for details.
196 *SBE.* XIII. p. 81 ff. For the names of the gods see fln p. 83.

lightenment), while Buddha was sitting under Rajayatana tree[197] there came two merchants from Orissa (Ukkala). They were travelling from Orissa to Madhyadeśa with 500 carts. Being guided by a deity (who was their blood relation in former life), Tapussa and Bhallika, the two merchants, go to offer rice-cake and honey to Buddha. Buddha thought Tathāgatas do not accept with their hands. At once, the four guardian-gods of the quarters, reading his mind, offer fo ır bowls made of sapphire. Buddha accepts them, receives the food and eats the same.[198]

Later on, at the request of the merehants, they were converted by the dyad formulae (refuge in Buddha and Dhamma)[199] as the Saṁgha did not exist then. They were his first lay desciples (Upāsaka). This was the first meal after Sambodhi.

Tapuśa and Bhallika are celebrated in AN (III. ed p 451). They are here at the head of twenty householders, who attained Nirvāṇa (the state of deathlessness) without becoming monks.

The prominent sculptures depicting Tapuśa and Bhallika theme are the South Torāṇa gateway at the great Stupa or Sanchi, Amaravati, Nagarjunakonds, Taxila and Gandhāra (Śramaṇa-Buddha image from Takht-i-Bahi (Inghold. 53). The belief from Shotorak displays bearded Indo-Scythian men (Bhallika and Tapuśa) flanking Buddha under a Sal tree.[200]

In Pali tradition (Nidānakaha pp 205-6), on the last day (the forty ninth day) of the s ven weeks, Buddha desires and is provided water and tooth-cleaner by Sakka. After washing his face and cleaning teeth, he sits at the root of Kingstead tree Then follows the traditional story of Tapuśa and Bhallika, who offer him rice-cake and honey.

Buddha thinks how to receive the food, as his previous bowl (in which Sujata had offered cooked rice and milk) had disappeared. The guardians of four quarters, knowing his mind, bring four bowls made of Sapphire. They are refused. Then they bring four bowls made of jade stone. They are accepted. Now Buddha commands them to become one and it so happens. He takes his food in the bowl.[201]

Later on these two merchants take refuge in Buddha and Dhamma.

The simple story of Vinaya (M. Vagga 1.4) wherein Buddha receives the food from two merchants, has thus been developed into a miraculous event by the time of *Mahavastu* (III. 303 ff p 290 ff ).

197 According to Buddhaghoṣa, Rajayataṇṣa (lit. royal apartment) was the name of a tree. In *LV*, it is called Tarayana and in Dipvaṁṣa (II 50) Khirapala. In *Mahavastu* (III 303) the place is described as Kṣirikavanashande Bahudevatake Ketiye.

198 Ref. PLATE-IV.

199 *Triad is Buddha, Dhamma and Samgha.*

200 Rosenfield *D.A. of the Kuṣanas*, pp 220-1; cf. fl notes 18-27.

201 The reason of rejection of Sapphire bowls is that according to *Vinaya*. II. 112, II. 82 such bowls are forbidden. For Geog. of Madhyadeśa, please refer my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". Geog. Ch.

Buddha spent forty-nine days or seven weeks enjoying the transcendental rapture without any solid food. When he is spending the seventh week, fasting in joy at a shrine of many devas in the thickest of kṣīrika trees, there came to pass two merchants Tapuśa and Bhallika[202] with 500 loaded carts from South. Their bulls Sujata and Kīrtika, were stopped by the magic power of the dead relatives of the two merchants. Everyone is frightened as the bulls would only stop if there was danger of a lion, tiger, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant, demon of the forest, flood or brigand. The relatives, who had become devas, standing in the air, shout that they need not fear, there was no danger but the Buddha was in the wood, serve him food as he is fasting since forty-nine days.

On hearing the words of Devas, the merchants bring refreshment of honey mixed with ghee and guided by the devas reach and request Buddha to accept the same. Buddha thought, that perfect Buddhas in yore received the food in bowls ! At that very moment four guardians of the world, reading his mind offer gold, silver, pearl, beryl, crystal white coral and ruby bowls to him. But he refuses saying that 'precious stones are not suitable for a recluse'. Then they offer bowls made of stone. He accepts and with the touch of his thumb converts them into one bowl. But four kotis of replicas of all the four bowls were to be seen (Sarveśām catarṇām pātraṇām catvāri patrākoṭini driśyanti).

Buddha takes his food in that bowl and blesses the merchants and their beasts (dakṣiṇam ādiśati) in very long passages. Ultimately in the end they accept Buddha, Dharma and Saṁgha. Being the first lay converts, now they demand a relic, which they could worship. Buddha cut off some of the hair on his head and asks them to "make a Tope for this hair". Then he cut his nails and ask them to make a Tope over them. They constructed the Topes Kesāsthalin and Valukṣa over his *hair and nails*[203] along with a Tope at Silakṣa where the Buddha had thrown the stones with his hands with magic power.

The legend is repeated in L.V. (XXV) with a little variation. Tapuśa and Bhallika were going from Dakṣinapatha to Uttarapaths. Their 500 carts were stuck-up and stranded near the spot where Buddha was sitting. They offer him cakes and honey. The gods of four quarters knowing the food-taking hour, offer various kinds of bowls made of gold, sapphire and jewels etc. Buddha rejects them. Then they offer stone bowls which he accepts (converts the four bowls into one) and takes in it his first begged food seven weeks after enlightenment.

Later on both the merchants are converted by dyad formulae.

202 The Pali version varies between Tapassu and Tapassa, and also Bhalliya and Bhalluka (*Mhv.* III fns. 4 & 5 p. 290).

203 These three places do not seem to be otherwise known. Rhys Davids in *Buddhist Birth Stories* p. 206.n 2 has an interesting note on these hair relics, in the course of which he alludes to the claims of both the Burmese and the Siṃhalese to be the modern posessors of them. He alludes also to the fact that the legend as given is Jātakas, is found in an ancient inscription on the great bell at Rangoon.

Here Vaiśravana predicts that the bowl would be the object of a celebrated Caitya. Śākyamuni, after taking his food, throws it in the air. It is caught by Devaputra called Subrahma. who takes it to Brahmaloka.

In *Buddhacarita*, as soon as the heavenly beings request Buddha to set the wheel of righteousness in motion, the gods of four quarters present the seer with begging bowls. Gautama accepts the four and turns them into one for the sake of his dharma. (B XIV 104). Then the two merchants of the caravan, being instigated by the heavenly deity, do obeisance to the seer. They are the first to give him alms.

Here the story of their conversion and blessings by Buddha is not there and so also the names of the merchants.

The conversion of two merchants and their taking the relics of Buddha and Buddha's request to construct Topes over them, has also a great significance in the history of Buddhism: (1) Buddhism spread far and wide, not with the efforts of monks alone but by lay-worshippers also. The merchant class, being rich, was the special agent, as they could afford to construct Topes, to keep Buddhism alive for centuries.

"According to the place attributed to Tapuśa and Bhallika, the Buddhist influence went with them to the northern region as well to that near the southern waters. Even before crossing the Hindukus range, Yuan-Chwang found traces of Buddhism in Bactria (Y. ch. Watters, I. 111). He might have encountered Buddhism in Ceylon or Burma, had he gone that far; and the great pagoda Shwe Dagen in Rangoon prides itself upon having kept Buddhism alive.' (Foucher L. of B. p. 134).

Aśoka's missionaries spread Buddhism far and wide beyond Hindukus range, and in Ceylon etc.[204] So if Yuan-Chwang found traces of Buddhism beyond India, it is no wonder.

But if the play upon words Bhallika (Bahlika) for Bactria and Tapuśa the name of the tin which India imported from the coast opposite to that of Bay of Bengal[205] is accepted, then one can construe that even in the days Buddha, Buddhism was taken to these places by the merchant-travellers.

**Bowls in Art**

A Gandhāra Art piece depicting the offering of the four bowls by the Lokapalas is lying in Central Museum, Lahore.

Lahore Museum, depicts a scene of the presentation of four begging bowls from Sikri (fig. 77, plate 53. J Marshall, The Buddhist Art of Gandhāra).

Peshawar Museum (plate 109, fig. 150) has a penal with two scenes (a) presenta-

204 Please see my '*History of B in Kashmir*'.

205 Foucher, *L of B*, fln 7 p 263.

206 *The way of Buddha* III, plate 4 and p 297, cf. fln. 200 also.

tion of the four bowls and (b) the death of Buddha (J. Marshall, The Buddhist Art of Gandhāra I).

A slab from Shotorak depicts two men in Indo-Scythian costume, standing in the Anjali Mudra flanking a throne, in which is shown a bowl.[207] This Kuṣana Art piece shows that the Bowl was worshipped by the devotees.

Historically viewed, there is truth in the begging bowl legend—Buddha did use one, for begging his food. The offer of different bowls by devas of four quarters and their conversion into one is simply the miraculous element, added by the devotee-writers, to magnify the super-power of their Teacher.

Thus, to conclude, with the growth of Buddha concept, the biographical accounts in the Buddhist texts also devoloped. The traditional accounts, with multifarious interpretations found in Sanskrit, Tibetan, Burmese and Ceylonese accounts, though give a connected life of Buddha and marvellous life-story of the Master, are not free from imagination. Here tradition or legend and History are nitermingled. As such to sieve out the real truth is rather difficult.

207 Meunie Shotarak No. 95 pl. XIII 72 p, 53 quoted by Rosenfield—*D.A. of Kusanas* fin. 32 p. 222.

2

# Mara Legend

Māra holds a very prominent place in Buddhism. In DN (I 87, 111, 150 ; III, 77, 84) he is equated with Brahma. In MN III 66. (p. 109) he is one of the four supernatural beings viz. Sammāsambuddha, Sakka, Māra and Brahma. It is in the legendary life of Buddha that he holds a very dominating position, as Buddha was able to attain enlightenment, only after conquering Māra.

**Sources**

Māra legend has its source in Sutta-Nipāta. In Pali works its developed form is found in Padānasutta (Mahavagga), Samyuta Nikaya (I, IV), Mahāparinibbāna Sutta and Nidānakatha.

Dhammapāda only refers to flower pointed arrow of Māra (46), Māra as a temptor (57, 104, 105, 274) ; as the king of death (46) and as death itself (47, 48, 287). However, it does not give details of the Māra legend.

Māra legend is also not found in Majjhima Nikaya. However, there is no dearth of stray references, found in different Suttas of the Nikaya. The Sutta specially assigned to Māra is Māratajjaniya Sutta (MN. I. p 395 H). It is a sort of rebuke to Māra, who got into the stomach of Moggalana, the great, and caused him pain.

Jātakas do not give details of Māra legend, and refer only to different aspects of Māra e.g., Māra, the king of death (J. II, Cowell. 240. p 167), death itself (ibid. p 41) ; and Māra, the lord of the realm of lusts (ibid. 40 p. 103).

Māravijayastotra, reconstructed from Chinese by Dr. Lokesh Chandra, sings the praise of Buddha ; the conquerer of evil spirits.

In Sanskrit sources, in LV (Ch. XXI), Mahavastu[1] (II pp. 354-372) and *Buddhacarita* (XIII), the legend is found in a more developed form.

1 Mahavastu is the collection of legends. It is the work of different authors, ranging from 2nd C. BC to 3rd or 4th C. AD. Winternitz *H.I.S.* II.

## Definition

"Māra is the Buddhist devil or Principal of destruction. Sometimes the term Māra is also applied to the whole of wordly existence, of the realm of rebirth, as opposed to Nibbāna."[2]

Māra is "Death, the Temptor, the evil principle" (Abhidhanappadipika 43. 1024 ; Mahavaṁśa, Ed. G. Turnover 236, Childers Dic p. 240 ff).

In SN (III, p 155) Rādha asks the exalted one (Buddha) "Pray lord ! how far is there Māra ?" "Where a body is, Radha, there would be Māra or a thing of the nature of Māra (perishing)". Here Māra is Mṛtyu or personification of death.[4]

Aśvaghoṣa defines Māra as "Him, whom in the world, they call the God of Love ; him, of the bright weapon and also the flower-arrowed ; that same one, as the monarch of the activities of the passions and the enemy of the liberation, they style him as Māra" (B XIII, 2).[4]

## Names

Māra has been given many names. He is called *Kaṇha* (black or dark one), *Adhipati* (Chief) ; *Antāgu* (destroyer) ; *Maccu* (Killer), *Manuci*, Yakka or *Yakṣa*[5], *Pamattabandu*[6] (a friend of the indolent or careless or passionate) and *Vāsavatti* (Māra nama vāsavatii sabesam uparı vāsamvatiati[8] (DPPN p. 619 ; Childers Dic. p. 241).

His usual epithets are Pāpiyama (Papiman), Anathakama (wishing ill), Ahitakam (wishing injury) and Ayogakhemakāma[7] (wishing unsafety).

Kāma or Kāmadeva has been used as synonym for Māra by Aśvaghoṣa in *Buddhacarita*.[8]

2 R. Davids, Pali-English Dic. (*PTS* 1985) p. 154.

3 Mārèta—Killer.
Where Māra is one, the reference is generally either to killer or to death. Thus Mārénāti Kills a mārèna (Itv. A 197) *DPPN*. p. 611. The Māra term seems to be extended to the four highest Kāmavacaradevalokas, "since in the eight Pariśas, the inhabitants of the whole devaloka, are classed as cattummārajikaparisa, Tavatimsapariśa. Māraparisa and Brahmaparisa, 'The hosts of catummahārajika angels and Tavatimśa angels of Māra angels and of Brahma angels (*Childers. Dic*. p. 241).

4 यं कामदेवं प्रवदनातित लोके चित्रायुधं पुष्पशरं तथैव ।
कामप्रचाराधिपत्ति तमेव मोक्षाद्विषं मारमुहाहरन्ति ॥
*B. XIII. 2.* Ref. Plate V.

5 *Yakkha. MN*. I. 338 ; *SN*. I. 122 (KS I 153) ; Sn 449 ; Mhv. (JJ Jones, II pp. 246-260, 301, 323. For details please refer to my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*."

6 Mahaniddesa ( *PTS*) p. 489
Sn. 430 ; SN. I. 123 (*K.S*. p. 153), 128 (*ibid* p. 161). *Mhv*. II 319 (p. 229).

7 MN.I. (*p. TS*) p. 418.

8 Death and world desires coordinate in Māra (J.W. Boyd *Satan and Māra*. Pt II. pp 74-5).

We shall now proceed to study, very briefly, some of the important names of Māra as mentioned in Buddhist literature.

**Kanha**

In DN. II. 261, MN I 337-38 and Sutta-Nipāta 967 ; Māra is named Kaṇha (Skt. Kṛśna or black one). In LV (p. 220) he is known Kṛśnabandhu.

In DN (II 262) Māra is called the great captain (Mahāseno) who orders his dark host (Kaṇho sena) to bind the whole assembly of Buddha with bonds of lust.

Māra's connection with the idea of darkness is also found in SN. I. 122. There the alternative title applied to him is 'Kaṇha' where he appears to Buddha and his Bhikṣus as 'smoky and murky'. In Therigatha, thick darkness (tamokkhando) is identified with Māra's power.[9]

Kaṇha is an ancient synonym for Piśaca or a friend (DN. I. 93). Here in the last line of the Sutta, this name of Māra is introduced.

It appears that Māra has been named as Kaṇha (black one) because of 'Black deeds' which he always performs, or the very incarnation of 'Tama' (ignorance or darkness).

**Adhipati**

Sutta 15 of the Catukka Nipata (AN. II. 17) lists four types of beings : "Chief of those, who have personality of '*Rāhu*', lord of 'asuras' (etaggam attabhāvīnaṁ yadidam Rāhu asurindo) ; Chief of those, who are given to sense-pleasures (Kāmabhoginam) is *Mandhātarājā* ; Chief of those, who have lordship (*adhipateyyānam*), is Māra, the Evil one ; Chief among all beings in the world of Gods and men (sadevake loke sāmarake Sabrahmake etc. the conventional comprehensive cosmic formula), is the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Sammāsambuddha. The curious thing is that the lordship of sense-pleasures is ascribed to Mandhāta, rather than to Māra, Mandhāta is mentioned in Jatakas also (II. 310, III 454). In Milindapanha (115) and in Therigatha (485), he is said to be the king of the world's four continents and a mythical ancestor of the Sākya people. The fact that Māra is, in this context, described as chief of those who have lordship (adhipateyyanam), may indicate that he is to be understood as Mandhāta's superior or conversely, that Mandhāta, as lord of sense-pleasure, is subordinate to Māra. This interpretation is strengthened by the evident order of importance, in the heirarchy, as they are given preference, in the concluding verse, where half a line each is allowed to the first two i.e. Rāhu and Mandhāta, a line to Māra and two lines to Buddha."[10]

*Antāgu* or Antaka is another name of Māra as mentioned in Vinaya commentary 966 and Dhammapada 48.

9 T.O. Ling, *B.M.E.* p. 61.
10 T.O. Ling, *B.M.E.* pp. 112-3.

Amarkoṣa's Svarga Varga 53 and 54 (Bibl. Ind. Edn.) presents both the learned and popular ideas of Yama among Hindus and Buddhists in first C. A.D. It presents fourteen names of Yama. The last name is 'antaka' i.e. the end.[11]

In Atharvaveda, Yama the King of death, is identified with Mṛtyu i.e. death, Aghā, Māra, the hateful evil slayer, or hateful murderer, Nirtha...[12].

Yama, in Buddhism, is identified with Māra.[13]

Thus 'antaka' the end is the personification of death i.e. Yama.

**Maccu**

He, who kills or causes death, is Maccu (Tatha Maccunoti māressa, idam vattam hoti).[14] His army is sometimes referred to as Maccusena. Māra is closely connected with Māramaccu (Skt Mṛtyu). Mṛtyu indicates death but Maccu causes death (Māryati).

**Namuci**

(Namucītti-ti-Māro)

In Vedic mythology, Namuci is a separate demon. He is a drought demon, who withholds waters. Indra, with thunder-bolt in hand, smites him and releases pent-up. streams.

Similar expression is found in Mahāsamya-Sutta (DN. II. 959).[15]

"They, whom the Lightening Hand did smite,
Now dwellers in the ocean, asuras,
Vāsavas brethern, they of wonderous gifts,
And splendid train : the Kālakañjas all,
Of fearnesome shape, the Dānaveghasas,
Sucitti, vepacitti and Paharada,[16]
With them came Namuci, Spirit of Evil......

In Buddhism,[17] he threatens the welfare of mankind. Because of its death[18]—

11 *Indo-Iranian J.* Vol. III. 1959 (article *Yama and Māra* by Alex. Wayman Barkeley. pp 44-5).

12 *E.R.E.* p. 406.

13 Cf. SN. III p. 155
Beal, L *of H.* p. 292.
Mahārājā the King of death the Yama (*Childers Dic.*)

14 *J* (Fausboll IV) p. 123.

15 Mahāsamyuta comy. Buddhaghoṣa says, he is called non-deliverer because he destroys all those who evade him (*DPPN.* p. 619).

16 "All are born of Suja, vāsava's mother, and had been driven out of heaven by Him-with-the-thunderbolt in his hand (DN. II. Tr. R. Davids ; ftn. 2 p. 289).

17 J, 536. Padāna Sutta 15 ; Sn. 425, 438 ; AN. II. 15, SN.I. 67 (Tr. p. 92) ; *Mhv.* I, 208, 264 ; II 254, 381 ; LV. XXI. 173 (p. 245) ; 192 (p. 248), 199 (249) ; नमुचिवशगतः(p. 239)

18 Amarkoṣa and Abhidhanapadipika explain Māra as death (*S.B.E.X.* ftn. 47 p. 17).

dealing association, Namuci is associated with Mâra : Namuci te sena (Padāna Sutta verse 15 H.O.S. 37).

Thus Namuci, as the proper name, has been borrowed from vedic mythology and absorbed in Buddhist evil-spirit, is Māra's another name.

J. Mason[19] points out that, when, besides Namuci, Māra is called Kaṇha, Antaka, Pamattabandhu and Adhipati, in early Buddhist teachings, the hearer would first think of the demons bearing those names, whose history was familiar to them. T.O. Ling interprets this and adds that the "hearers would not only think of the demons they already knew, they were now hearing them spoken of a new connection, they were seeing them in a new light, the demon symbols were being used in the service of Buddha-Dhamma. These were, to some extent, therefore being re-interpreted or given a new context. While this, no doubt, was the original purpose for the use of these names in connection with the Māra mythology, their continuance in the texts, has its own value, for a historian of religion, in providing an indication of the way in which the Māra-symbol grew, by absorption of popular demonological names etc." (T.O. Ling, B.M. pp 55-6).

**Papima**

In Buddhism, Pāpima, is identified with Māra[20] the evil personification. Moggalana says to Māra "Māro tvam asi pāpima" (Māra you are evil one) MN. I. 332.

When Buddha attained enlightenment, he said "You are overcome O death". Here he spoke of Māra, Pāpima (Death the evil) i.e. personifying death. This expression agrees with older Brahmanic expression in Śatpatha Brahmaṇa e.g., Pāpima Mṛtyu. Examples of this usage are found in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. Windish opines that epithet 'Pāpima', originally refers to death as an evil or ill.[21]

**Kinds of Mara**

In scholasticism, there are five Māras,[22] which are of great hindrance in the attainment of Nirvāṇa. They are :

(I) Khanda Māra (Māra of the elements of body)
(II) Kleśo Māra (Māra as vices of passion or sin)
(III) Maccu Māra (Māra as death)
(IV) Abhisaṅkhara Māra (Māra of the Karma)
(V) Devaputta Māra (The sinful Angel or temptor)

19 *Religion Populaire dans ie canon boudhique Pali* (Louvain, 1942, p. 103, quoted by T.O. Ling vide B.M.E. fln. 39 p. 70).

20 Māra is called Antaka, Pāpima, Pamattabandhu, many a times i.e. Pāpima 7 times, Antaka 6 times and Māra four times in SN, emitting the meaning of the name (T.O. Ling, *B.M.E.* pp. 118-9).

21 Quoted by T.O. Ling vide B.M.E. p. 47).

22 Malalāśekera, *DPPN*, p. 611, Childers Dic. p. 241, Maccu Māra is marana Māra. In Uttan Sutta SBE X Māra is the king of death.

Skandhas are Māra, because so long they exist, Nirvāṇa can not be attained. Kleśa or the original sin or passion or lust or the Evil Principal is the Māra and a great hindrance to the attainment or Nirvaṇa. Death (Maccu māronam antaka) and Karma (Abhisaṅkharo) are the manifestation of Evil Principal.

Rebirth involves previous death. Whatever is continued existence there must be Karma and Kleśa. Which are the abiding cause. Thus there is close connection in the first four Māras (Childers, Dic. p. 241).

Whenever, in the literature, there is reference to one Māra, it is to Maccu Māra, where it is to three it is to Kleśa Māra, Mārana Māra, Devaputta Māra, and when to four it is to Khanda Māra, Kleśa Māra, Abhisaṅkhara Māra, Devaputta Māra (Childers Dic. 241).

Siksha Samuccaya (Tr. Bendall & Rouse p. 192) mentions only the four Māras (1) Māra of the elements of being (2) The Māra of sin (5) The Māra of death und (4) The Māra of gods.

**Types of Mara**

L.V. (XV. pp. 163, 261, 302, 311, 328, 357) describes Buddha as the conquerer of Kleśa Māra, Skandha Māra, Mṛtyu Māra and Devaputta Māra.

In Mahavastu (I. p. 264, II 238, 413 ; III 254, 273, 321) Kleśamāra (lusts), Devaputra Māra (Deva) and in (III. 281), Mṛtyu Māra (death) and Skandha Māra are mentioned, and not five Māras as in Sutta Nipāta.

"Ittivuttaka Aṭṭhakatha seems to indicate that the four Māras are the five Māras less Devaputta Māra", DPPN p. 613.

**Asvaghosa and Mara**

Māra in B (XIII. 2) is called Kāmadeva (god of love), Chitrayudham (bright and sharp weaponed) Pushapaśaram (flower-arrowed), Kāmprachāradhipati (lord of the activities of the passion or lust), Mokṣadviṣam (enemy of the liberation), and in S. (IV 8) Kaṅdarpa, the husband of Rati).

The description of Māra, in Aśvaghoṣa's ornate Kāvyas (B & S), alludes to the development of Māra legend from one Kañdarpa of Mahābhārata to five Māras in Buddhist literature.

Being Kāmadeva—the god of love, he rules the realm of passion and is Kleśa Māra. Being chitrayudham (bright and sharp weaponed) his attack is sure and never misses the target and is Maccu Māra. Being Pusapaśaram (flower-arrowed) his attack is soft and pleasant, like the divine touch and is Devaputta Māra. Being Kāmaprachārādhipati, he is the origin of the activities of passion or lust and thus harbinger of existence or Five Skandhas, is Khando Māra. As existence or rebirth depends upon Karma he is Abhisaṅkhara Māra.

Māra, with flowery-arrows resembles Kāmadeva of Brahmanical literature. We can thus say Māra is Kāmadeva.[22b]

As Buddha, is the deliverer from death, Māra is regarded as the enemy of Buddha, his disciples and his doctrine.

**Mara's Family**

In Pali Canon,[23] Sutta Nipata 82, and Nidānakatha (p. 202) Māra has three daughters, Rāga, Ārati and Taṅha.

In Jataka I 132 (p. 288)[24] and Mahavastu III (285. 12 ff)[25] the three daughters are named as Tandri, Rati & Ārati, while in L.V. (p. 236)[26] these are called Ārati, Rati and Tṛṣna, Aśvaghoṣa, in *Buddhacarita*, (XII. 3) on the other hand has mentioned them as Ārti (discontent), Priti (passion) and Tṛṣna (thirst).

According to Tibetan accounts (Rockhill, Buddha p. 31), the three daughters of Māra, are also named as Tṛṣna, Rati and Priti.

Bigandet (p. 103) names them Taṅha, Ārati & Rāga.

When and why Māra seeks the help of his daughters to subdue or defeat Buddha, is described differently in Pali and Sanskrit tradition.

In Pali tradition, Māra, finding Bodhisattva, equipped with "Ten perfections, the conditions precedent to the penetration, the extraordinary knowledge of inclinations (way of senses) and latent tendencies of the attainment of compassion, of the double miracle, of the hindrance & of all-knowing ......" draws sixteen lines of thoughts and is very sad, finding himself lacking in the above qualities, then (just before enlightment) his daughters, Taṅha, Ārati & Rāga (Craving, discontent & lust) come to his rescue. They assume various forms ; each of them assumes the appearance of a hundred women, girls, women who had never had a child, or only once or only twice, middle aged women, older women—and six times they went up to the Blessed one, and professed themselves his humble hand-maidens. But the Blessed one paid no attention, as he had become free by the complete extinction of rebirth conditions.[27]

22b Ref. Plate V.

23 *SN.* I. (*PTS. 1950*) IV pp. 156-7, craving, discontent and passion, Dhm. A. Vol. I. p. 202.

24 *J.I.* (Cowell) 132, p. 288, Tandri, Ārti & Rāga.

25 Mhv. (Basak Edn.) Mhv. II 322 (p. 300) talks of many daughters of Māra (accomplished in music and arts.)

26 *LV. XVIII. 17* mentions Kāma, Rati, Kṣutipipasa and Tṛśna as the army of Māra.
तास्तिस्रो मारदुहितरो रतिश्चारतिश्च तृष्णा च मारपापीयास . . . L. V. p. 275.
कामास्ते प्रथमा सेना द्वितियाँ अररतिस्तथा तृतिया क्षुत्पिपासा . . . ते तृष्णां सेना चतुर्थिका ।
L. V. XVIII 17, p. 192.

27 Nidānakatha (R. Davids) p 202 ff. Taṅha is synonym for lobha, and lobha, doṣa and moha-are connected with Māra (Therigatha 281). "Lust or hate or ignorance, these things no plea sure be, cut are the cords. They from all bonds are free" (Therigatha) (*Psalms of early Buddhists 282*).

When, thus defeated, they (daughters) realised the Truth in their father's word: "The saint, the welfarer of the world is not easily led away" and hence returned.

In LV (XXI) when all the efforts of Māra Pāpiyana to tempt Bodhisattva to quit the path of Mokṣa (Liberation) or his seat or the requests to enjoy the pleasures of power and lust fail, he invites his three daughters. Just before enlightenment, these daughters of Māra display their 32 arts. Māra evokes[28] and tempts Gautama to enjoy the pleasures of senses with them. But they fail.

Being unsuccessful, these daughters try their best to make their father understand the unbound power and self-control of Gautama and try to dissuade him fight to the Sage. But all in vain (LV. p 236 ff).

In Mahavastu (II. 322-3, pp 300-1) Bodhisattva decides not to awaken the supreme enlightement as long as Māra and his host were not conquered. At this, Māra was terrified. He finds no joy in his mansion. He approaches Bodhisattva and allures him with seven treasures, sovereignty over four continents and adds "—Behold! how these daughters of Māra, carrying flowers of fair sandalwood stand in the sky in front of us, clothed in pure garments and accomplished in music and the arts. With lutes, symbols, tabours, conch-shells, flutes, trumpets, sampbārikas, nakulakas and kiṃphalas, they now sing, in chorus at the foot of the tree". But all this had no effect upon Gautama, who was vowed to awaken supreme enlightenment.

Being defeated, with his staff, Māra writes on the ground "Vanquished am I by the deva of devas, by the mighty Sākiyan lion." (Mhv. II. 349, p 318).

In *Buddhacrita* on the other hand, these three daughters of Māra do not play any significant part in the attack on Bodhisattva. They are only mentioned accompanying Māra, when he approached Aśvatha tree (B. XIII. 7, 14).

In Tibetan accounts, these daughters of Māra go to tempt Buddha, just before enlightenment, but the narration is very different. Here Māra's army was defeated by Bodhisattva. All his weapons were miraculously turned into garlands and bunches of flowers to decorate Bodhi-tree. Then Māra said to Buddha...................."He would not be able to attain Nirvāṇa with such little knowledge". Buddha here tells Māra that you (Māra) have offered only one sacrifice, while he had offered myriads of sacrifices. Here Māra boasts and says no, he is the conquerer. Here Bodhisattva cites the earth as witness, which roared and supported sage's view. Being terrified, Māra runs away with his army.

Then come Māra's daughters who try their best to conquer Gautama. Being unsuccessful, they request their father not to repeat the attack But no, rather he implores the daughters to attack again. Ultimately all are defeated.[29]

28 मारः पापीयान् स्वः दुहितॄमन्त्रं स्मः . . गच्छध्व . . . यूयं कन्यका . . . (L. V. pp. 218-234 कतमा द्वात्रिशदाकारा । (L. V. p. 233)

In *Māra Suttas* (SV. IV) also Māra sends his daughters to tempt Gautama just before enlightenment.

29 B.C. Law, *Buddhistic studies*. pp. 268, 274.

In Māra Sutta (SN. I.IV pp. 146-9), these three daughters assume various shapes of young middle-aged and mature-aged damsels and try to over power Bodhisattva but are defeated.

Windisch[30] and Johnston (B. XIII, fn. v3) hold that this Sutta is a later addition. One of the daughters (in Pali and Sanskrit) is called Ārati. She is known as Rati to Aśvaghoṣa and is the wife of Kandarpa (S. IV. 8) (the god of love) or Kāmadeva.

**Mahabharata & Three Daughters of Mara**

The legend of three daughters of Māra found in Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita* names them as Ārati, Priti and Tṛiśna. In *Saundarananda* (IV 8) Rati and Kaṇdarpa are mentioned as a couple along with Pramoda & Nandi, Praharṣa and Tuṣti. Johnston finds nearest parallel of these pairs in Mahābhārata (I. 2596-7) with Dharma's sons and their wives : Śama & Prāpti, Kāma & Rati and Harsha and Nandi. He (Johnston), on the analogy of the new Poona Edition of Mahābhārata (I. 60-80), which reads Nandi for Nanda, suggests that if Pṛiti is substituted for Prāpti, the change would bring the parallel closer. According to him the three pairs symbolise Kāma, Artha and Dharma and show perfection of love.[31]

Here it may not be out of place to mention that in Hindu literature (including vedic and epics), there is a common legend that gods grow jealous of the spiritual power, acquired by the penitents. They despatch beautiful damsels (Apsaras) to disturb them in their meditation. Generally all fall prey to them, except the very mature sages. Only Śiva was able to defeat Kāma.

**Women**

In Māra Sutta (SN, I. IV.) Mahavastu and Buddhacarita, Māra makes use of his daughters to tempt Buddha. In vedic tradition the Dāsyu (Vṛtra, Namuçi etc.) is said to have used women as weapons (RV.V, 30, 9). Again Indra's foe is said to have warred against the Bull (Indra) with women. (R.V.X. 27. 10).[32]

Thus the insertion of women in Māra's army to tempt Bodhisattva is not a new thing in the Māra legend has its roots in RV. (X, V).

Again in Buddhism, Buddha is referred as 'god of gods' perhaps because though Śiva defeated Kāma, he accepted Pārvati as his wife, while Buddha, being victorious, never cherished any women, not even his own wife.

30 *SN.I.* IV fn. I. p 156
*SN.I.* (Pali PTS 1884) p. 124 ff "Dhitaro Sutta'.
31 Johnston, *S.IV*. fn. verse 8.
32 स्त्रिमियो अत्त् बृषेणं पृतन्याद युद्धो अस्य विभेजानि वेदे :
स्त्रियो हि दास आयुधानि चक्रे किं मा करन्नबलः अस्य सेनाः । RV. V. 30. 9.

**Mara's sons**

Padānsutta (Sutta-Nipāta) Samyutta Nikaya (Māra Sutta) and Nidānakatha give no reference to Māra's sons.

In Sanskrit sources i.e., Mahavastu, Lalitavistara and *Buddhacarita*, Māra is not only blessed with some of abstract metaphysical character, but their number also varies.

In Mahavastu Māra has many sons.[33] In this legendary account, in the Māra tradition, his sons Janisuta, Sārthavaha and the minister urge him not to fight or even think of attacking Bodhisattva. But all in vain. Ultimately they are all defeated by Buddha.

Lalitavistara[34] names Sārthavaha, Durmati, Madhurnirghoṣa ; Shatbāhu, Subhdhi, Pramadaka etc. as Māra's sons and also talks of his one thousand sons. These sons were arrayed in the battlefield on the right and left of Māra. His son, Sārthavaha on the right side, and his commander (senapti) Bhadra Sena, urged Māra to submit to Buddha, but all in vain. Ultimately all suffered defeat.

On the other hand, Aśvaghoṣa[35] has mentioned only three sons of Māra ; caprice, gaity and wantonness. They accompanied Māra to disturb Bodhisattva under the Aśvatha tree.

In LV. and Tibetan sources,[36] the right side battalion was led by Sārathavaha, who urged Māra to submit to Bodhisattva and while those who were arrayed on the left, were determined to fight to the end.

**Mara's Army**

Māra's main object was to prevent Buddha from attaining enlightenment. He, a personified supernatural enemy of Buddha, had ten-fold mythological army (Daśabala), with which he unsuccessfully attacked Buddha.[37] This Marbalam, in Sutta Nipāta's (H.O.S. 37, 1932, verses 436-439) Padāna Sutta, consists of : Kāma (sensual pleasures), Ārti (discontentment), Kṣuttappipāsa (hunger and thirst), Tañha

33 Sārthavaha *Mhv*. II 327 (p. 304 ff). Mahāsmṛti Mhv. II 337 (p. 310) Janisuta, Mhv. II (p. 308) Vichyupratiṣṭhı (p. 310 mentioned only in Mhv.) ; Janisuta showered bright flowers on Bodhisattva (p. 308) Kāla, Minister (*Mhv. II* p. 364).

34 *L.V.* (P.L. Vaidya) pp. 218, 220, 224, 225, 230, 231.
मारपुत्राः परिपूर्णं पुत्रसहस्तं । (Ibid p. 230).

35 B. XIII. 3. तस्यात्मजा विभ्रम हर्षदर्प··· ।

36 B.C. Law, *Buddhistic Studies*, p. 270.

37 T.O. Ling, has divided the operation of Māra's forces in two parts, Mythological terms and abstract terms etc. (M.B.E. p. 59). This retinue, as a matter of fact, consists of the regenerate power of the soul, assembled in Samādhi, (K. Coomarswamy, B.C, Law *Vol. I*, p. 472. Māra has one thousand hands (*Mahavamsa Geeger* Ch. 30, verse 75).

(desire), Thinamiddha (sloth and temper), Bhiru (fear). vicikiccha (doubt), makkho (disdain to others), Thambho (self adultation), Lābha (gain), Śiloka (fame), Śakkaro (honour), micchāladdosayo (wealth obtained by improper means), Attana in Śāmvkkām Se (self praise) and Pareca avajānanā (speaking ill of others). Mahā-Niddesa Aṭṭmakatha (pp. 165-66) tells us how this ten-fold psychological instability. allegorically spoken as Māra's army can lead a recluse to utter failure and frustration.

Early canonical works do not refer to Māra's army. However the later accounts describe it as consisting of four units (çaturangini Sena). Dipaṅkara Buddha (pre-Gautama) is also narrated not to battle with Māra's forces. But Māra's realm, at Dipaṅkara's enlightenment were rendered lustreless and fell in pieces (Mhv. I. 230 p. 186).

The mention of ten-fold army of Māra and the legend, which has its origin in Sutta Nipāta (Padāna Sutta), is repeated in later Buddhist literature.

Mahavastu (II. 240, 269-70 pp 227, 25 ff), which records all previous traditions and legends, tells of Māra's 'ten-fold army of derison', when, Bodhisattva, sitting under the Bodhi-tree, did not pay any heed to wicked Māra's attacks. Otherwise, the description of ten-fold army of Māra agrees in toto with Sutta Nipāta's description.

Lalitavistara (XVIII 17-20 p 192)[38] speaks of Māra's tenfold army in the traditional manner and is in consonance with Sutta Nipāta and Mahavastu. Mahavastu (II. 315 350 pp 296-318) gives a detailed encounter of Bodhisattva's encounter with Māra and his hosts. Here the description of the army and its defeat is no doubt traditional, but is also much more stretched and little different from that given in Pali commentaries and LV.

Aśvaghoṣa as already mentioned earlier has depicted Māra as the god of love and passion. (B. XIII. 17). He has not named the ten forces of Māra. Rather he has only referred to his army in a general way as consisting of various forms, for the many types and weapons (B. XIII 18, 19 ff),[39] waiting the command of their master the Māra, and anxious to kill and seize Bodhisattva, whom they had encompassed under the Bodhi tree (B. XIII 27).[40]

**Mara's Realm**

Māra, in Buddhism, has been assigned all mythological powers, though he is 'Agti' (MN. I. 159, 160). He enters the heart of a householder or a Brahmin, whenever he finds a chance to excite in him ego or passion (MN. I. 336), though he

38 *P.L. Vaidya*, Ed.

39 Infra. *Māra aud his army* in B.

40 *B XIII.* 72 भुतगणा : ।

is believed to be blind (Andham akāsi Māram or in commentary Māro Passitum na Sakkoti).[41]

SN (IV. p. 152) gives a vivid picture of Buddha's explanation to his disciples, about Māra's smoky and murky movements. 'Do you not see Bhikkus ! that smokiness going east, north, south, downward and in between ? "Yes Lord". "That, Bhikkus ! is Māra, the evil one, who is seeing everywhere for the conscious of Godhika of the clansman". Godhika, with consciousness not reinstated, hath utterly ceased to live". Then Māra, the evil one, holding the Vilva-wood lyre of golden colour, drew night to the exalted one in verses, e.g.

"Aloft, below & black and forth I seek
the quarters four and in between, all in vain
I find not, whither gone is Godhika". (SN. I. p. 152)

In MN (II. pp 261-62), Diṭṭhadhammika Kāmasañña (the idea of sensual pleasure in present life), Kāmamasañña (the idea of sensual pleasure in future life) forms the kingdom state and food of Māra. Thus plainly speaking sense pleasures and the perception of them constitute Māra's realm.

In MN. I. 227. Māra's stream is equated with saṁsāra. What lies beyond that stream is equated with Nibbāna :

Vivataṁ amatavāraṁ khemaṁ
Nibbānapattiyā
Chinnam papimato sotaṁ
Viddhastaṁ Vinalikataṁ (MN. I. 227)

Thus, in brief, Māra is the lord of the realm of vāsana (Passion).

**Mara and Buddha**

In Pali tradition,[42] Māra appears in the life of Bodhisattva quite soon. When Buddha was about to cross the city-gates of Kapilvastu, Māra appeared there and tempted him, saying "Go not forth, Sir! in seven days from now, the treasure-wheel will appear and will make you sovereign over the four continents and the two thousand adjacent isles. Stop, O Lord! I am Vāsvatti"———————" Bodhisattva replied," it is not the sovereignty that I desire. I shall become Buddha and make the ten thousand world systems for joy."

From that time onwards, Māra followed Bodhisattva, "ever watching for a slip, as closely as a shadow, which never leaves an object."

41 *MN. I.* (PTS. 1960) 159. 160 and *ft. notes* p. 202
"Diṭṭhadhammika Kāmasañña (i.e. the idea of sensual pleasure in present life), Kokamasañña (i.e. the idea of sensual pleasure in future life) from the kingdom state and food of Māra (*MN. II* pp. 261-62).

42 *Nidānakatha*, p. 175 ; cf. *Gaudama* p. 62.

In Pali tradition : Nidānakatha (p. 190 ff), Padānasutta (Sn 425-449 etc.) Dhm. Comy. I. (H.O.S. pp 19?-9?) and in Sanskrit tradition : Mahavastu (II, ?38) LV (XXI) and *Buddhacarita*, Māra again comes to Gautama while he was practicing austerities[43] on the bank of river Nariranjana, before enlightement.

As far as his resolve not to budge from the seat under the Bo-tree is concerned, both Pali[44] and Sanskrit[45] tradition agree in toto. Here Nidānakatha says, "May my skin, indeed even the sinews and bones wilt away, may flesh and blood in my body dry up, but till I attain complete enlightenment, this seat I will not leave. And he set himself down; in a cross-legged position, firm and immovable."

Māra tempts[46] Bodhisattva to offer sacrifices and subdue the world with arrows and obtain the world of Vāsava. In B (XIII B), in order to break the vow of Gautama, he says that he never discharges his ever-destructive arrow, on those, who are given to sensual pleasures.

All efforts of Māra failed to tempt Bodhisattva. Then Māra adopted another method i.e. to overpower him by frightening.

Māra, the king of destruction or death in Sutta Nipāta 1103, with his ten-fold mythological army, himself mounting on an elephant, surrounds Gautama, to take him away from his place. (Sn. 441). But Gautama resolves to crush the army with his understanding (Sn. 442). For seven years, Māra followed Bodhisattva, step by step, but could find no fault with the sage (Sn. 445). Being sorry for his futile efforts, the string of his lute slipped down (Sn. 448) and the evil minded Yakkha disappeared.

This defeat of Māra by Bodhisattva is quite natural, before attaining enlightenment. All the traditions record it. But in later literature (Nidānakatha, LV, Mahavastu, *Buddhacarita* and Tibetan records), this brief narration of Padānasutta has been stretched to the maximum extent of the imagination of then writers. In Nidānakatha (p. 190 ff), finding Bodhisattva's firm resolution, Māra calls his hosts (Mārabalam). His army stretches 12 leagues to the right, left, front, behind, above and is nine leagues in height. His sound of cry is like an earthquake's noise. Māra's elephant is 250 leagues high, girdled with mountains, He creates thousand arms for himself, seizing in them all kinds of weapons, The battlion of Māra assumes various colours and forms and is equipped with various kinds of weapons.

The attack on Gautama was from all sides and of all kinds e.g. whirlwind, mighty rain, storm of rocks, storm of deadly weapons, ones two edged swords, spears and arrows, smoking and flaming through the sky, storm of charcoal ambers, sand

43 Buddha practiced austerities for six years, striving for enlightenment. This corresponds with Vinaya and the Canan and also Tibetan sources (*Asiat. Res.* XX p. 301).

44 *Nidānakatha* (R. Davids), p. 190.

45 *B. XII.* 120, XIII 58-59 LV (*Lefmann*) p. 299 ff.

46 *Mhv.* II. 405, p. 361
*B. XIII* 9, 13.

and mud. But when all these reached Bodhisattva, they became divine flowers. Then, to terrify the sage, Māra brought darkness, which also disappeared, as if before the bright sun. When all these efforts failed, Māra asked Bodhisattva to vacate the seat, which the devil claimed to be his. Bodhisattva claimed the seat, saying that Māra has neither perfected in ten perfections, nor in the five great acts[47] renunciation, nor perfected the way of good in knowledge and understanding, so this seat belongs to him (Bodhisattva) and not to Māra. Being enraged, Māra threw his sceptre-javelin, which is in the shape of wheel.

At this Māra's company shouted in joy and Māra claimed it as his victory and his host as the witness. But Bodhisattva, drawing his right hand from beneath his robe, stretched it before the earth and said "Art thou not witness of the seven hundred fold great gift I gave in my birth as Vassantra," The great earth said "I am your witness."[48]

At this Māra fled away. The gods praised Tatlhāgate for this victory.

In Mahavastu (II. p. 364 ff), Māra attacked Bodhisattva at the foot of Bodhi-tree, with great army of four arms, including Kumbhāṇḍas, Yakṣas and Raksaṣas. He surrounded the ground for 30 Yojnas, himself mounted upon a chariot, yoked with a thousand horses. Buddha was attacked by an army of frightful and monstrous beasts, which made rumbling clamour. This army had beasts, having faces of horses, buffaloes, asses, goats, rams, dear, lions, tigers, panthers, bears, dogs, hogs, cats, ravens, cocks, vultures and eagles etc. Some were headless trunks, others were one-headed, two-headed and many headed. Some were eyeless, one eyed, without hands, without feet, without arms while some others had ten arms. They carried varied types of weapons e.g., knives, swords, hatchets, spears tridents, pikes, ploughsharers, discusses, clubs, hammers, axes, scimitars and skulls. Some breathed fire, venom and snakes from their mouths. Some carried mountain tops and others brandished wheels with blades in their rims at Bodhisattva.

The frightful and thunderous din of the army was silenced whom he has defeated. It fled away when Bodhisattva, thrice stroked his head, thrice his bent knee and struck the earth with his right hand. Then Māra relented and wrote with his reed, on the ground "The great ascetic, Gautama will escape from my realm."[49] Here the great Kālā Nāga, finding Bodhisattva having come with a resolution to the Nairanjana river, comes out, praises, wishes salutes him and goes away. Then comes Māra to tempt Buddha and asks him to enjoy the days of youth, live in his father's house and rule the land. But Māra is defeated, (ibid. 360) and adorns

47 The five awareness, seems not to have been mentioned in Pali texts. They, in Mhv. (II p. 360 ff), are "awareness of the past, of calm, of ease, of the impossible and finally the supreme awareness——(perfect enlightenment).

48 Cf. *Mhv.* II 342 (p. 313 ff)
This is Bhumisprashamudra in Buddhist iconography.

49 "The account in Mhv. (II. 281) differs considerably, both from Pali commentaries and LV and is probably earlier than both". (E.J. Thomas, *Buddha*, p. 74).

Bodhisattva with folded hands (from the air). When he attains five awareness and again tempts Gautama. Here is inserted the story of his son, Janisuta, advising him not to disturb the sage. Kāla, his minister, advises him opposite to Janisuta's advice. Māra, with his force, comes out to fight Bodhisattva and finally gets defeated.

LV (Ch. XXI) gives a long description in prose as well as verse, about the struggle of Bodhisattva with Māra : Māra papiyan is informed about Gautama's exaltation. This causes thirty two inauspicious dreams to Māra. He, with his monstrous and horrible hosts, having several kinds of weapons, prepares to fight. In this army of Kāma (Māra) are found two parties of his sons ; white and black standing on his right and left. Kāma is defeated by Buddha. Then he sends his daughters to tempt Gautama, but they also are unsuccessful. In the end, all the celestial beings (devas) Asuras, rakṣas, kinnaras & Śakra are stated to shower praise over Buddha, for his victory over Māra.

In LV (Ch. XXII p. 225) we are told that Bodhisattva was able to defeat Skanda Māra, Mṛtyu Mara, Kleśa Māra and Devaputra Māra with Prajña.

In *Buddhacarita* (XIII), Aśvaghoṣa has also given a detailed account of Māra's fight with Gautama. The devil approaches as soon as Buddha takes his seat under the Bo-tree. He tries to tempt Bodhisattva, saying that the latter should give up Dharma of liberation, perform sacrifices and obtain the world of vāsava, motive being the preservation of Māra's realm, which he thought would become empty, if the sage succeeded and preached the path of liberation to the world.

The description of the traditional army of Māra, which surrounded Siddhārtha, sitting under Bo-tree, as found in *Buddhacatita*, is that it had hordes of friends or demons," of animal faces : those of fishes, horses, asses, camels, tigers, bears, lions, and elephants; one-eyed, many- eyed, many- mounted, three-headed, with pendulous bodies and speckled bodies (B XIII 19). Some were without knees or thighs or with knees as vast as pots (B XIII 20). They were armed with lances, trees, javelins, clubs, swords, tusks or talons (B XIII 18, 20). Some had skulls for faces or half-broken off faces, ashy grey in colour, tricked out with red spots, carrying ascetics' staves, with hair smoke-coloured like that of a monkey, hung round with garlands,[50] with pendent ears like that of elephant; clad in skin or entirely naked ; with half their bodies white or green or some copper coloured, smoke coloured, tawny or black ; some had one over-garment of snakes or rows of jingling bells at their girdles (Ibid. 22) ; some as tall as toddy-palms or dwarfs with projective tusks or with faces of sheep and the eyes of birds or with cat-faces and human bodies (Ibid 23) ; with dishevelled hair or with too knots and half-shaven polls. clothed in red with disordered head-dresses, with bristling faces and frowning visages (Ibid. 24). Some of them ran, leapt widely about, jumped at each other, some gambelled in the

50 Garlands of skulls (*Johnston fn. B. XIII*, v. 21) kapāla sect followers wear such garlands.

sky (Ibid. 25), some danced about, brandishing a trident, one snorted as he trailed and another roared like a bull in his excitement (Ibid 26).

The description of Māra's army, as given in B (XIII 25) agrees in toto with Rama's vānarsena (monkey brigade), when he attacked Shri Lanka (Ceylone). There the monkeys jumped, gambelled and sped among the tree-tops, while, in Buddhacarita Māra's soldiers also performed the same feats.

"The animal-faced demons of Māra, remind us of the hosts of Rāvaṇa and the weapons of the apes. The juxtaposition of animals, in the expression : "Yaścaiva nāṇāvidhaghorarupaiḥ vyāghroṣṭranāgendramṛgāśvavaktraih" (R. VI. Lix. 23), is similar to what we find in Buddhacarita (XIII. 19). The rumblings of armies attack etc., are narrated in both.[51]

**Limbless Army**

In the Ṛgveda (VII. 104-7), Indra is invoked to let the headless (vigrivasah) followers of inert gods perish ; In Atharvaveda (IV 18-4) unnamed gods are invoked to lay low the limbless or crestless and headless (visikhan vigrvan) sorcers.

In Padānasutta (v. 3) the account of Namuci's army contains one verse "pāgatha etha dissanti eke samanabrahmaṇa tan ca maggaṁ na jananti yena gacchanti sabbata".

In Sanskrit sources ; B XIII Māra's army consists of soldiers who are without knees or thighs. In Mahavastu II 338, 410 (p. 364) and in Lalitavistara, some soldiers are described to be with headless trunks (ḳecid Aśirsāh) while in Chinese and Tibetan sources they are without faces and eyes.[52]

In LV and Mahavastu, Māra's army has taken the shape of fiends. In *Buddhacarita,* it takes the form of Brahmaṇical ascetics as well as fiends.

The description of Māra's army in IV. Ch. XXI, Mhv, II. 338 & 410 and *Buddhacarita* (XIII. 18, 19, 20, 25, 26) are parallel with Śiva and Skanda's followers in Mahābhārta, IX 2576 ff and X 265 ff.[53]

In Rama carita Manas[54] (p. 53) Śiva or Shambu decorates himself, while going

51 *R. VI. XLII*, 38 etc. and B. 52 ff quoted by B.C. Law, Aśvaghoṣa p. 20 and fn.
52 *B. XIII* fn. 19.
53 *Johnston B. XIII* ftn. 19, p. 192.
54 R.C., Manas (Kasi Ed.), pp. 53-5.

सिवहिं संभुगण करहिं सिंगारा,
जटा मुकुट अहि मौर संवारा . . .

. . . . . . . . .
कर त्रिशूल और डमरु विराजा
. . ; . . . . . .

to marry Parvati. The marriage party's (bārātis) description agrees with the Māra's hosts, as narrated by Aśvaghoṣa (B XIII 18, 19, 20. 25, 26). Thus the introduction of limbless soldiers, fiends and ascetics in Māra's army in Buddhism is not all a new insertion. It has its origin in vedic literature and Aśvaghoṣa is fully influenced by the great epics Ramayana and Mahābhārata in his narration.

**Mara the Temptor (After enlightenment)**

Though Bodhisattva became Buddha, still Māra did not leave him. Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN II) mentions several occasions when Māra approaches Buddha with a request to die.

The first of such requests was at Uruvela, when he was enjoying the bliss of success, under Bo-tree,[55] just after his enlightenment. Buddha spurns him, saying that he would not enter Nirvāṇa till he gains, monks as his disciples and extends the life of holiness among all mankind. "Na tavāhaṁ pāpima parinibbāyissaṁi yāva me idaṁ bramacariyaṁ na iddhañ ceve bhavissati bhitan ca vitthārikaṁ bhujaññam puthu-bhūtam manussehi suppakāsitamti" (DN II 112. 3).

The story of this temptation is found in Mahavagga in MN (I. 167 ff).

कोई मुखहीनं विपुलमुख काहू,
बिनपद कर कोइ बहुपद बाहू।
विपुलनयन कोई नयन विहीनां,
रिष्ट पुष्ट कोई अति तनखीना ।

छंद,

तनखोन कोऊ अतिमीन पावन
कोऊ अपावन गति धरे ।
भूषण कराल कपाल कर,
सब सच सोनित तन भरे ।

खर स्वान सुअर, सृगाल
मुख गण वेष अगतणि को गणै ।
बहुजिनि सप्रेत पिसच
जोगि जमास वरनत नही बनै ।

तनछांर ब्याल कपाल भूषण
नगन जटिल भयंकरा
सगभूत प्रेत पिचास जोगनि
विकट मुख सुख रजनीचरा ।

विकट रूप रूद्रहि जब देखा ।
. . . दोहा 95 (p. 55)

55 He enjoyed the bliss of success under Muccilinda tree then under Rajyatana tree respectively (*H.O.S.* 28, p. 4).

DN II, 36, 1, Nidānakatha ; Mhv. III 314 ff LV XXV, in Tibetan and Burmese tradition.

Oldenberg (Buddha p. 116) is of the opinion that had there been no insertion of Māra's tempting suggestion to enter Nirvāṇa at this stage, there would have been left no opening for Brahama, to request Buddha to preach the doctrine for the benefit of humanity.

Malālaśekera (DPPN II p. 618) suggests that the word Māra might have been used in the sense of physical death (Maccu Māra). The occasion was when Buddha felt the desire to lay down the burden ; "Perhaps they were the moments of physical fatigue, when he lay at death's door, for we know, that the six years he spent in austerities, made inroads on his health and that he suffered constantly from cramps, digestive disorder and headache etc.

On this occasion, one night, when Buddha was sitting beneath the open sky and it was drizzling. In order to frighten and disturb him, Māra assumes the shape of a king elephant, bullock etc. Not only this, he assumes the appearance of a king of snakes with "body like a boat (hewn out) of one tree-trunk", his hood "like a distiller's woven tray", "his tongue darted from his mouth, like the forked lightening's dart, when Māra is thundering, the sound of his breathing in and out, appears to be the sound of the puffing of a smith's bellows. (SN. IV. p. 133).

Māra tries to disturb Buddha's sense impressions (sounds, tastes, odours and touch) and then that of his disciple, Godhika, (Ibid pp. 150-3) and then Samiddhi (Ibid pp. 148-9) in that order.

At another occasion, when Buddha was teaching the Norm and was surrounded by a great congregation, Māra drew nearer and tried to darken their understanding. Here he calls himself as the 'rival wrestler'. (Ibid pp. 137-38, 142).

Māra tempts Buddha (while once he was living in the Himalaya regions in a leaf hut) to govern the world and live comfortably, as the exalted one was capable of turning Himalaya into gold. But Māra was unsuccessful (p. 145 ff).

Māra, in these Māra Suttas (SN. I. IV), is regarded such an evil spirit, even that if Buddha is not given alms in a Brahmaṇa village, it is attributed to Māra's instigation (Ibid. p. 143).

Assuming the guise of Buddha is the greatest deceit that Māra can effect. SN. I (IV. 114. pp. 114-5) records one very interesting philosophical discussion of Māra with Buddha. When he was enlightening the brethren with the philosophy of Nibbāna (Nirvāṇa), Māra went to the Teacher, in the guise of a ploughman and boasted of his domination over eyes, ears, sounds, mind and its impressions. Buddha defeated him, saying it is true he dominates the organs objectively, but where 'O Evil one, eye is not, nor object nor field of consciousness of the eye's contact, there O Evil one', is no waygate for thee". Similar explanation is given by Buddha about ear, sounds,

odours, tongues and its tastes, body and its touched things, mind and its impression etc.

In Mahorathapurani (*5th* C. AD) Budhaghoṣa presents[56] us about a hundred legends. In one of these, Māra, who was capable of assuming any shape he desired, 'attano Kāma rūpitaya', assumes the shape, resembling that of Māra in toto i.e. mode of talking, holding his robe and bowl and approaches an Upāsaka named Śuambaṭṭha or Sura Ambaṭṭha. This he does, being jealous of the effect of Buddhas teachings over the upāsaka, whom he thought was in his clutches. Māra's efforts again were futile, as Sambattha recognised Māra.

No where else does the temptor approach an upāsaka.

Historically viewed, it tells the evolution of Buddha legend by fifth century, where Māra himself approaches a single upāsaka who had attained the fruit of first stage with Buddha's teachings.

In Aṣtasāhasrika Prajñapāramita[57] Māra tries to create misunderstanding between teachers and their pupils by misinterpreting Buddha's Teachings of emptiness (śunyata). There, Māra comes to the assembly, in the guise of monk and says "——. . . The same as space, is this all knowledge. It is dharma, which is not, is non-existent. Who can anoint himself for it, who fully knew it ? There is not one, who could go forth to it. There is no one, who could fully know it, nothing that should be fully known. There is no one, who would understand and there is nothing that should be understood".

In Tibetan records, Taranath accounts that Māra created disturbances in Upgupta's congregations, but had well-awakened conscious.

When, for five days Māra could not completely disturb or uproot the audience of Upgupta, he himself, along with his sons, assuming the form of celestial dancers, along with 36 male and females, succeeded in completely disturbing the congregation. At this, Upgupta garlanded the dancers and turned them into aged and ugly ones in rags. Being thus converted, the dancers begged pardon and were excused (by Upgupta), with a warning that they would not harm the followers. Māra, at this resumed his usual form and put Upgupta to shame by saying that he had always disturbed Buddha, but was never harmed by the exalted one. At this, preaching the doctrine, Upgupta asked Māra to show physical form (Rūpakāyā) of Buddha since he had never seen that and had seen only Dharmakāyā. At this Mārā assumed the form of Buddha. Upgupta became full of reverance for Buddha and bowed down. This the evil Māra could not bear and vanished (Taranath H.B., pp. 36-38). In

56 *JRAS*. 1902 vide "Māra, in the guise of Buddha, "by E. Hardy pp. 951-955. Buddha had taught that all the Skandhas are impermanent, are associated with suffering and devoid of self. Māra, in the guise of Buddha, went to the Upāsaka and told that he has come to correct himself. Some of the Skandhas are permanent, stable, and eternal. This was unbelievable. Hence he was recognised.

57 AP XVII 331 (APC XVII p. 125) J.W. Boyd, *Ibid* p. 89.

Buddhacrita, LV & Mahavastu, Māra's army is furious, but in Taranatha's account, it is a party of dancers and musicians, who disturb the audience of Arya Upgupta. Historically viewed, this incident tells the change, which had come in the Māra legend by the time of Taranatha. Here, Māra though of devilish nature, is not devoid of conscious.

## Māra Devata

In Somayutta Nikaya (Vol. I p. 67) Māra comes to Buddha in the guise of a devata, named Vetamvāri and tells "he who hates tapa (austerities), is addicted to rūpas or beautiful forms and wishes to go to the regions of the blessed (devaloka), incompetent to give advice, regarding the attainment of the next world. Buddha recognised Māra and explained to him the 'Rūpa' in this world, in the next and in the sky, is praised by Namuci only. It was nothing but a bait.

In Digha Nikaya (II. 12, 15), he (Māra) is a Deva, who ranks with Brahma. In the same Nikaya (DN. II 109) he has his own assembly as the assemblies of nobles, Brahmaṇas, house holders and wanderers, the angel hosts of the Guardians of kings the great thirty three and Brahma. In another reference (DN. II. 262) he is a great captain (Mahāsena) and commands an army.

In Mahāsıhanāda Sutta (MN) Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN. II 105-6) and Anguttara Nikaya (III. V. VI 57 and IV p. 202), Māra is equated with Brahma, a monk, a Brahmaṇa or a Deva. Similarly in Tibetan records (Bkah-Hgur)[58] Māra, being the lord of the regions of desires is Brahma, i.e. the lord of all the regions of the universe. Brahma is said to be the highest god in Hinduism. By equating him with Māra, these writers appear to intend lower down his (Brahma) position in the later Buddhist tradition.

## Mara Deva and Egoism

Finding Gautama, when seated with a vow to attain enlightenment, Māra, the master of egoism, says to Gautama "O Great Recluse ! I have great power and magic—great majesty—great splendour—am a mighty bull—a great conquerer—have great army—and great strength—thou will not escape from me. Thou art a human being—while I am a deva—A recluse's body is born of a mother and father, is a heap of boiled rice and sour milk, is subject to rubbing, massaging, sleep, dissolution, disintegration and destruction, while my body is made of mind (manomayaḥkāyo). Thou will not escape from me." Mhv. II 267-269).

Here Māra takes pride in that he is deva, has a mind made body. In LV (XXI he is Adhipati or lord of the realm of desires.

58 *Udanvarga, Ātma*, ftn. verse 5 p. 99 .

**Mara requests Buddha to pass away three months before Parinibbana**

Anguttara Nikaya (IV. pp. 310-11),[59] records the supposed conversation between Buddha and Māra three months before his Parinibbāna. Here Māra comes and reminds Buddha of his promise with the former to pass away (die), when he has propagated his doctrine (Buddhism) to pay and other disciples and this was the time for him, as his mission had been fulfilled———. "Your disciples are now competent and this is the time to pass away". Māra also said the same thing regarding the Bhikkhunis. The blessed one replied, "Do not be anxious. The Tathāgata well pass away after the lapse of three months."

In Dhammapada commentary (vol, IV 140-141) since Māra wanted to torture Buddha, he did not spare even Rāhula, whom he attacked, while he was with his father (Buddha) at Jetavana monastery.

Thus, we find that just from an allegorical term (Māra), used in the earlier literature, to represent what causes a man to sin, has been personified into a horrid figure in the later Bud hist literature. He is narrated as a Deva and a demon as well. Māra assumes the shape he likes. He has been made omnipresent. He tries to disturb and lead astray Buddha, his pupil-teachers, upāsakas ete. He disturbs the assemblies, misrepresents and misinterprets Buddhist philosophy. He awakens discord and acts rather as sin-itself personified. He has to be conquered, to reach the realm of immortality.

**Mara and its conquest**

In MN (I. 117), in the course of enlightenment. Buddha, in the last watch of the right, won a crucial victory : ignorance was dispelled ; knowledge arose, darkness was removed and light arose "avijja vihāta, tamo vihato . . . . . ; Being enlightened he became aware of the nature of opposing force against which he was struggling. This opposition or force is Māra, which, in Dīgha Nikaya (III 77.58) Buddha explains ; "I consider no power, brothers ! so hard to subdue as the power of Māra". Māra can be conquered with five ways, which are associated with (1) the four Iddhipādas, (2) Right conduct, (3) entry into and abiding in the four dyhanas, (4) love burdened thought and (5) destruction of the deadly taints.

In the same Nikaya (MN I. 152) Buddha tells that only the fourth kind of recluse escape from Māra's mastery. This very sutta refers to Māra's companions.

In AN (G.S. IV pp. 108-9), which records the conversation which Buddha is supposed to have with Māra, an Aryasāvaka, who is endowed with seven kinds of Sādhanas and four jñanas, is beyond the reach of Māra. In the same Nikaya (AN. IV. 303 ; cf. G.S. IV p. 202) Buddha tells his brother that he was not com-

59 Cf. *DN II* 105-106, 114-115.

pletely awakened till eightfold series of knowledge and vision was fully purified in him. Further he adds (AN IV. 433-4, pp. 191-1) "Monks ! when a monk enters and abides in the sphere of infinite consciousness---of nothingness---of neither perception nor non-perception and by wisdom sees that the cankers are completely destroyed, he is said to have put a darkness around Māra, and Māra's vision, being blotted out, and rangeless---he becomes invisible to the evil one (Māra) and has passed through the world of entanglement".

Again in DN II 120, AN. II. 25, fair right efforts (1) preventing evil states not yet arisen, (2) the overcoming evil states which have arisen, (3) producing good states previously not existing and (4) maintaining goodness that has arisen one can overcome the realm of Māra.

In Nidānakatha (pp. 192, 194),[60] finding himself surrounded by Māra and his host, who wanted to "seize or slay or drive away this prince from his seat," Bodhisattva takes shelter of ten perfections (charity, morality, self-abnegation, wisdom, exertion, patience, truth, resolution goodwill and equanimity, practised and followed by former Buddhas and resolves "to strike this host with the sword of perfection and thus overwhelm it."

Thus being equipped with these requisites, Bodhisattva was able to defeat Māra and attain enlightenment i.e. in the first watch of night, he realised the former state of existence (purvanivāsa P. pubbentivāsa), in the second watch, he acquired heavenly eye (divyacakṣus, P. dibbacakka) and in the third watch he acquired the knowledge of the series of cause and effect (pratityasamutpāda and P. paticcasamuppāda).[61]

In Jataka 434 (cowell p. 316) Buddha tells his disciples the four earnest meditations, the holy eightfold path and the nine transcendent conditions which give freedom from Māra.

Another Jataka tells that he who has mastered Rāga (passion) dveṣa (fault) and Moha (delusion) is beyond the kingdom of Māra, 'Bhikkav santkani rāgadoṣa mohasangini bhinditvapabbajitati---" (Fausboll, J. IV. 123).

Buddha says to Māra in M. Vagga[62]
Sights, sounds, scents, tastes,
And things to touch,
Bringing delight to mind of man---for such,
All wish, all, form is past and gone,
Humble art thou, O end-Maker."

60 Cf. *H.O.S. III* p. 78.
61 For details please see authors "*Aśvaghośa and His Times*".
62 *Horner's Tr.* p. 29.
Vinaya version puts scents before tastes in a usual way,
Cf. M. Vagga V. 1, 27.
Sn. 387, 759.

Those who understand Nibbāna (Sn. 1093) the destruction of decay and death (because they ha e seen Dharma) do not fall into the net of Māra and are companions of Māra (Sn. 1091-94). The eightfold path, four truths and freedom from desire give freedom from Māra (Dhmp. 27?-4). When one is thus fully emancipated, Māra cannot conquer him (Dhmp 104-5). And wise ones, having conquered all association with Māra, do not go to rebirth (Dhmp. 733).

One can overwhelm Māra with higher wisdom (Udana 33) and composed mind (Itivuttaka 40-41, Udana 33, vide Minor Anthologies Pt. II).

Those who keep their mind under control (Dhmp 37) and strong as a fortress, can fight Māra with the sword of knowledge (Ibid. 40).

Itivuttaka (56, p 158), explaining the bondage and freedom from Māra, says "Monks ! in whomsoever lust is not advance, delusion is not abandoned of such an one it is said". He is bonds man to Māra. Māra's noose encompasses him". He is freed from Māra's bondage, Māra's noose is loosed for him, he is not at the mercy of the Evil one."

In LV (XXI), Buddha is supposed to have conquered Māra, being possessed of extreme sensual self-control,[63] whose mind never wavered at the sight of any woman,[64] is possessed of Prajṇa (pp 236, 247), jñana (p 237.) Dhyāna (184 & 247) and complete control over Tṛsna (desire) which developed only with the satisfaction of Kāma (p. 226), was devoid of attachment (Moha p. 237),[65] and possessed of Śila qualities (p. 247).

In Mahavastu II 340 ff (p. 312 H), Bodhisattva himself tells Māra that being possessed of high st wisdom, morality, charity forbearance, meditation, abiding in love and compassion, having no awareness of skamdhas or elements, or sound, taste, smell or touch, or even Māra, but having the awareness of what is within, he (Māra) was incapable of stirring even his hair.

63 *LV* (P. L. Vaidya) p. 236; p. 241.
कामैविरंक्तरत्किमनसो न च रागरतं ।

64 (*LV Ibid*) p. 241
या स्त्रिमाय उपदर्शित तत्र तात
प्रविलीयु तस्य हृदयं भविय: सराग:
तं दृष्ट एकमपि कम्पितु नास्य चितं
शैलेन्द्रराज इव तिष्टति सोऽप्रकम्प्य: ।।

65 *Ibid* p. 237.
न वा मह्य खिलं न रज्यना न च मोही
आकाश: समतुल्यमानसा जिन भोन्ति ।। 109 ।।
ना रागेण सही वासाम्यहं न च दोषैं
(नौ, नैंनित्य अशुभ अनात्मभिर्वंसि साधंम् । . . .
निमुक्तं मम चित्तु . . . ।। 108 ।।

In *Buddhacarita* (XIII 4, 72), Bodhisattva was able to defeat Māra with resolution, wisdom, and freedom from passion or desire.[66]

In Theragatha (256), the adoption of Buddhism, leads one to the freedom from Māra.

**Mara Cannot Conquer, whom ?**

In Nivapāsutta (MN. I. 159 ff), Buddha addresses the monks and explains, in answer to the question "And how, monks ! is there non-entry of Māra's companions ? Hear in, monks ! a monk, aloof from the pleasures of the senses, aloof from unskilled states of mind, enters and abides on the first meditation, which is accompanied by initial thought and discursive thought, is born of aloofness and is rapturous and joyful ; Monks ! this kind of a monk is called, one, who has put darkness around Māra, (andham akāsi Māram.........comy explains-na Mārassa akkhīni bhini......more passitum na sakkoti),[67] and who having blotted out Māra's vision, so that it has no range, goes unseen by the evil one."

Thus in simple words, the control of sense-pleasures conquers Māra.

In Aṣtasāhasrika Prajña pāramita (Ch. 25, 425.6 p 172), Buddha explains to Subhuti, the training which leads a Bodhisat va to the terrace of enlightenment, where Māra cannot overpower him. The lord says, "He must train, in extinction, in non production, in non-stopping, in No-birth, in the absence of positivity in isolatedness in Dispassion, in Space, in the element of Dharma, and Nirvāṇa."

When a Bodhisattva trains himself, thus, he trains in (the conviction that) "suchness does not get extinct", when he trains thus, he is trained in all knowledge, "in the perfection of wisdom, on the Buddha-level in the powers and grounds of self-confidence in all Buddha-dharmas, in the cognition of all knowing". He being so trained cannot be overpowered by Māra.

In Dammapada (8), Māra can never overpower "one who lives not for the pursuit of pleasures, who guards well his senses, who is moderate in eating, who is possessed of inflicting faith and who conserves his energy."

Māra can never find out the way of those who lead a sportless life who dwell in wakefulness and who are fully emancipated through perfect knowledge".[68]

If a man subjugates himself and practices restraint, neither deva nor Gandhabba, nay nor Māra, together with Brahma, can undo his victory". (Dhmp 104, 105).

So one should fight Māra with a strong mind, with the sword of knowledge and guard his soul without hankering". (Dhmp. 40).

66 Desire is the stream of death and the realm of Māra (*Sn*. 554).
67 *MN.I* ftn. 2, p 202.
68 Cf. *Udanavarga*, v 105.

### Mara conquers whom ?

Māra gets hold of the person who changes his heart, when tempted from good moral habits (MN. I 336), one who has no restrain over his senses, is immoderate in eating, is indolent and weak (Dhm. 7), in whom mindfulness of body has not been developed (MN. III 88) and who burns the three fires of lust, hatred and delusion (Itiv. 93). Māra comes to a Bodhisattva, and hurts such a one, who is not firm and has no firm faith in Dharma, despises other Bodhisattvas, is conceited and he thinks "I dwell in the dwelling of detachment, but not so they, not there's the dwelling in detachment. Māra is then joyful, because such a Bodhisattva keeps far away from full enlightenment" (Aṣta. Prajña. ch 24, 417-8, pp 168-9).

### Achievements of Mara's Conquerer

Dhammapāda (175),[69] explaining the achievements of the Māra the conquerer says : "Swans fly through the sky, through the air they go by reason of their supernatural power ; the wise, when they have overcome the Evil one (Māra) and his elephant (along with his forces) are removed from out this vortex (the word)".

Just after his enlightenment, Buddha said, "I am the Arthat of the world. In this world, I am an unequalled (alone) among gods and men. I have conquered the host of Māra. As there is none other like me, no one can be my master. All alone in the world I have found perfect and unsurpassable wisdom. (Saṁyaka, samboddhi;"[70] In *Buddhacarita* (XIII, 63-65), Māra is advised not to cause extinction to the man of knowledge. Such a man utilises his intellect in saving the world drowning in the flood of the cycle of existence. Such a man ferry the beings, lost in the darkness of ignorance.

### Mara in Iconography

As the conquest of Māra symbolises the extreme mind (Citta) control of Buddha, before enlightenment, this became a very popular theme with sculptors as well as painters of the times. We shall first take the legend as depicted in the sculpture.

In Calcutta Museum[71] No. 47 represents two of Māra's soldiers, armed with a sword and shield tumbling down below the seat of Bodhisattva.

No. 48, depicts one of the son's of Māra's army dissuading him from campaign, In this scene, the figure of Bodhisattva is missing and Māra's army is divided into rows. In Nos. 50-52, Māra is seen being caught by a person from the side, may be one of his wise men trying to dissuade him.

69 Cf. Udanavarga (*Tr. Rockhill*) 2.
70 Ibid *Bkah-Hgyur*. Tr. Rockhill, 3.
*M-Vagga*. I. 7, 8.
Cf. *LV XXVI*.
71 A Guide Calcutta Museum pp. 46-47 Nos. 47-52.

G 250 (Lucknow Museum)[72] fig. 9 represents Māra unsheathing his sword to attack Bodhisattva and is checked by some one.

In the same penal (fig. 9 p. 20), on the other side, another lieutenant of Māra is similarly being checked or it may be Māra himself.

In LV Sārthavaha, Māra's son, alongwith other sixteen Devaputras, tries to dissuade him from his ill-doing actions towards Gautama.

In *Buddhacarita* (XIII 56 ff) "certain being of high station and invisible" one dissuades Māra, who was frustrated on observing sage's stability.

A stucco sculpture from Hadda, reproduced by M. Hackin, represents a demon, a member of Māra's army, in the act of raising his hands and removing his head.

Peshawar Museum Plate 43 (J. Marshell, the Buddhist Art of Gandhāra Vol. I) depicts the attack of Māra on Buddha Guides Mess, Mardan).

Fig. 8 represents Buddha enjoying supreme bliss of enlightenment under the Banyan tree. Māra approaches him and asks him to attain Nirvāṇa. But Buddha says, he will not attain Nirvāṇa till the good conduct is spread to male and females (followers). Here he is represented sitting, lifting his right hand warding off Māra (J.S.S. vol. X pt. 2 Bangkok 1913).

The finest representation of Māra's army is in Gandhāra school 'the host of Māra' (fine grained schist $22\frac{3}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$). It agrees with Aśvaghoṣa's description of Māra's army.

Its replica is lying in Chandigarh Museum. The original is in Central Museum Lahore.[73]

G 266 (fig. 10, Lucknow Museum represents Māra standing with his daughters.

Figure OOHI (2nd C.), in Mathura Museum, displays 'Māra Vijaya' by Buddha. Here Buddha is shown seated on a raised platform, is touching it with his right hand. Beneath the platform[74] a figure of Kāmadeva can be seen, with a drawn bow aiming at Buddha.

Māra, with a drawn up bow, is described by Aśvaghoṣa in B (XIII 8).

Mathura Museum displays Kāmadeva (No. 18. 448. 2nd C.BC.) with five arrows, in right upraised hand and the other hand on the thigh. This agrees with Buddhacarita (XIII. 7).

In Mathura Museum, figure (34.2552) displays a headless figure of Kāmadeva. He holds a cluster of arrows and is crouching a male figure under his feet. This per-

72 Catalogue Lucknow Museum.

73 Gandhāra sculpture from Pakistan Museum p. 55 (*Ref. PLATE-VI*) Cf. Grunwedel, B.A.I. fig. 48 p. 96, ff for details.

74 A similar scene of Bhumisprashamedra is lying in *Lucknow Museum* (G 250) fig. 6), *Calcutta Museum*, p. 24.

haps illustrates the epithet 'Pushpadhanvā or Kusumā Yudha' (one equipped with a bow of flowers) it perhaps belongs to the Late Śunga and early Kuṣana period.[75]

The President of Siam Society in 1913, (In a study of the Statues of Siam) found every monastery (or wat) in Siam containing the Statue of Buddha, in sitting attitude ———the most numerous among them are two ; Buddha in meditation and temptation of the Buddha by Māra.[76]

Now coming to the representation in paintings, we have the famous Ajanta Cave I Pl. 8[77] (Griffith) depicts the scene of assault and temptation of Māra. His host of army and two daughters can also be seen in this picture. Māra is depicted here in sullen mood.

Gautama is shown unmoved and is seen touching the earth, as a witness, to maintain his Vajrāsana or vow (i.e. Bhumisparsha Mudra).

This picture (or painting) is sculptured in Cave XXVI (fig. 64) and also at Boro-Budur (Plate 109 & 110).

**Conclusion**

A brief review of the foregoing will be sufficient to indicate that the 'Daśabala' or mythological ten-fold army of Māra, merely hinted in Sutta Nipāta gradually developed in course of time into a lengthy Māra legend, in the later Pali and Sanskrit literature. There appear even his daughters and sons. The sons are of two types, i.e. Sātvic and Tāmsic. The daughters are the temptations to bring the downfall of Buddha. His soldiers have been described as limbless, while others of multiple limbs. He is so to say the over-lord of the kingdom, made of Rāga (passion), Doṣa (fault) and Moha (delusion). "Māressa santakam ragadoṣa mohasanagaṁ bhenditva pabbajita te" (J. IV Faubsboll p. 123). Thus his realm and power is somewhat limitless. No doubt he gave tough fight to Buddha, before his enlightenment. As per the legend the last temptors were Māra's daughters i.e. women. Māra's army has been depicted as of various forms and ferocious, while Buddha was all alone, sitting under the Bo-tree.

Here a natural question arises—Was it a psychological struggle in the mind of Gautama, with the contemporary sects or temptations to leave the hard ascetic's life and return home, which was full of luxuries of life ? or a struggle within himself to conquer his own self. It seems (as depicted by Aśvaghoṣa) that it was a struggle within Buddha himself, and with himself (1) a fight between self-control (saṁyam) and vāsana (passion) and (2) a psychological struggle in his mind at the thought of tough struggle he will have to do to vindicate his stand-point, in the society, which

75 R.C. Sharma, *Mathura Museum*, p. 24.
76 *J.S.S.* Vol. X pt. II figs. 5 and 8.
77 *Ajanta I*, Griffith, Plates XXVII, XXVI and fig. 8, p 24.
Cf. *Ajanta.* G Yazdani, pls. XXVIII and XXIX.
Cf. Grūnwedel, B.A.I. fig. 49, p 27.

was shackled in the clutches of various contemporary sects, a society which was deeply engrossed in caste-system and believed in sacrifices etc.

Here it may be pointed out that in the Brahmanic tradition, even before Buddha we have the Śiva-Kāmadeva fight story (in Mahābhārata). Here Śiva was able to defeat or burn Kāmadeva with his 3rd eye of wisdom. Similarly in the Māra legend Buddha was able to defeat Māra with his Prajña. Thus apparently the insertion of Bodhisattva's struggle with Māra and his hosts, before enlightenment, has been made to depict the steadiest self-control of the Master Bodhicariyāvatara (V. 4, 5), explaining the benefits of the Citta (mind)—control, says that one with controlled mind can overpower even ferocious animals, while one with a subordinate mind (Citta) falls prey to them. So there is nothing new in the Māra-legend—it is simply a later addition, based on ancient Brahmaṇic legend, and is inserted to eulogise Buddha, the Master. It was quite natural when he had to fight the prevalent beliefs in the then society.

# 3

# Refutations of Brahmanical Practices

### Introduction

The most important philosophical system, prevailing in pre-Buddha period was Vedic. It laid greater stress on religious ideas and philosophical matters i.e. knowledge (Jñana; dhyāna, Yoga, yajñas (sacrifices), rather than on Karma (action or work). Even in Buddha's own time, the influence of priestly class, the Vedic religious institutions, such as sacrifices (Yajñas) and other rituals (Karam-Kandas) (explained in Śatpath Brahaman) did not completely lose ground, though the impact of Upaniṣad and Gita's teachings of 'Karam Yoga' had started to be felt much earlier.

### The Evolution of Religious Thought

Vedic Hymns, in praise of Gods, first by oneself and then by priests (Brahmaṇas) on behalf of the king and the rich, were the simple but essential part of the religion of the people of early Vedic period.

In course of time, sacrifices (Yajña) were introduced, which became more complex in the later Vedic and Brahmaṇas periods. By this time, these rites and ceremonies, were considered everything—rather had some mystical meaning.

No doubt in the last phase of middle Vedic age itself, the quest for knowledge of these rituals had started, which is known as the Upaniṣadic trend.[1]

Then comes the age of Upaniśads, in which the ceremonial rites, with philosophical questions about the relation of Ātman and Brahma (the cause of the universe) which were earlier discussed only casually in Brahmaṇas, received greater attention and their philosophy was discussed with serious investigation.

"The Brahmaṇas witnessed the growth of Brahmavidya as the Science of self (Ātma)."[2] This self could only be realised with knowledge (Jñana), which required repeated meditation and contemplation. Thus this age gave preference to Jñana.

1 G.C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*; p. 281.
2 *Ibid*, p. 286.

Thus, as the rituals were everything to the Aryans of Vedic and Brahmaṇic period, in course of time, knowledge (jñana) became everything to the Aryans of Upaniśadic age.

Then the sages seem to have thought that if divine favour could be achieved through sacrifices, how could it be permanent ? From this seems to have developed the new theory of *Karman* : 'as thou sowest so shall thou reap'. This new idea of the theory of Karman and the transmigration of the soul is fully explained by Yajñavalkya to Janaka in Br. Up. (4.4 1-5) (Pandey, op. cit. p. 286).

Gita is very much influenced by these Upaniṣadic thoughts. Here, Dhyāna Yoga, Jñana Yoga[3] (the path of knowledge), Karma Yoga (II. 47, 51; III. 19, IV. 42) is fully explained. The highest teaching of the Upaniṣads and Gita is the existence of soul. 'Tatt-Tvam-Asi'.

The society inherited by Buddha was traditional, consisting of four castes (Bahmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śudras). Brahmaṇas, because of their knowledge of the Vedic lore and being priests, who performed sacrifices, dominated over other three castes.

By the time of Buddha, Brahmaṇas, instead of leading the life of chastity, purity, self-control, freedom from cavetousness etc. had fallen from their prestigious position. They began to advise kings and richmen, may even to the common men, to perform more and more elaborate and costly sacrifices and demanded very much in charity. Some of them were like small kings with lands, elephants, women and all the available luxuries of the time.

Buddha, who did not believe in caste system and believed that a 'man is noble or ignoble, because of his deeds and not because of his birth or caste' (Sn. 135, 141), taught equality of mankind.

Buddha's teachings and the evolution of his ideas can be traced in Buddhist Suttas, Aśvaghoṣa's Kāvyas and Vajrasuci.[4]

Buddha had to vindicate his stand-point of caste-free society in a caste-ridden society. In doing so he did not want to annoy Brahmaṇas. On the other hand he brought fame to them, reminded them of their forgotten high ideals of life i.e. leading a life which was simple, truthful, honest, chaste, free from greed and lust etc. Such Brahmaṇas he accepted in his lore and equated them with an 'Arhat' and thus brought greater number of conversions.[5]

**Knowledge** (Jñana)

From the moral point of view, Hume[6] sees three remarkable things in Upaniṣads (1) Knowledge has absolute value and efficacy, above everything else.

3 *Gita, Ch. IV. 21*, 25 speak of Jñana Yoga or the Yoga of knowledge. Verses 36 to 39 refer to Jñana as culmination of all spiritual practices.

4-5 For details please see Ch. V in my '*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*'.

6 *Hume*, pp. 58 ff.

According to Upaniṣads 'one who knows thus, is exempt from all sins. As fire burns up wood, so one who knows thus' consumes all his evil-deeds and becomes clean and pure, free from decay and death. (Bṛh Up. 5, 14, 8). Again in Chand Up. 5, 24, 3), as soft fibres of Iśika (Ikha) reed, when thrown in to fire, are burnt, thus all his sins are burnt, who offers this Agnihotra with full knowledge of its purport.

(2) Later on, this idea was modified. Good conduct took the place of knowledge. It is told in Katha Upaniṣad (3, 6, 7, 8). 'He who has understanding and whose mind is always firmly held, his senses are under control, like good horses of a Charioteer......He who has understanding, who is mindful and always pure, reaches indeed that place from whence he is not born again'. This very Upaniṣad (2, 24) tells us, "He who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil, and subdued, or where mind is not at rest, he can never obtain the Self (even) by knowledge."

(3) In contrast with the above two ideas, another one in the Upaniṣads is in connection with good and evil. "This idea is of exemption from the region of moral distinctions as the result of the cultivation of one's knowledge. A possessor of knowledge, or a man who knows thus, as he is usually called, soars high up in the region where there is no moral distinction between good and evil; he has overcome these distinctive ideas."[7]

Buddha, no doubt, cudjels against the Brahmaṇic rituals of sacrifices and austerities, but highly valued the knowledge (Jñana)[8] of Upaniṣads as will be apparent from the following illustrations.

Dhammapada (372) assigns the highest place to Jñana (knowledge). It tells "without knowledge there is no meditation, without meditation there is no knowledge; he who has meditation and knowledge is near unto Nirvāṇa". In Sutta Nipāta (273), Buddha explains to Yakkha the origin of passion, hatred, disgust delight and horror (Sn. 269) and says, "Those who know whence it (sin) arises, drive it away. Listen O Yakkha! they cross over this stream, that is difficult to cross, and has not been crossed before, with a view to not being born again". Again, in DN (Dialogue II. 91), Buddha says, it is through not knowing and grasping the Four Truths, that one has to traverse through many a births. Once these are grasped, the cause of rebirth is removed.

In Buddhism the possessor of knowledge is considered virtuous. "Happy is a virtuous life, lasting to old age ; happy is a firmly rooted faith, blessed is the acquisition of knowledge (Pañña), and blessed is abstention from evil" (Dhm. 333). Further it (Dhm. 289) recommends"——The wise man, protected by a virtuous life, should straightway clear the path, leading to Nibbāna".

Buddha based his religion on morality, and "Establishing himself on morality,

7 S. Tachibana, *Ethics*. p. 49.
8 For details please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*" Ch. VIII.

an intelligent man cultivates concentration of the mind and knowledge, the ardent and prudent monk will extricate that entanglement" (SN.I. 13, 165 ; Vism. I-2).

S. Tachibana (Ethics. p. 52) concludes, "the Buddha esteems knowledge very highly, but he does not place it above morality, as the Upaniṣads do ; nor does he identify knowledge with morality. They always go together, and the latter leads the way. This in general is the Buddhist notion of the relation between knowledge and morality."[9]

**Sacrifices**

A study of Vedic literature reveals that the fear of unforeseen hand behind all sorts of natural phenomenas e.g., the sun, moon, stars, earth, etc., and of natural calamities, such as earthquakes, floods or famine, created in the minds of common men, the idea of something more powerful (spirit) behind them. It appears[10] that fearful mental—experiences, created the idea of demons or evil spirits, which created awe in the mind of common men.

Thus starting originally from the idea of worship of nature, it changed to worship of God and other sacrifices, chanting powerful Vedic hymns, to appease the evil spirits. However, this could be done only by those who possessed the means and skill to do so. Originally, this was done by more learned and chaste class, known first as priests and then as Brahmaṇas, in lieu of fee, which depended upon the will and means of the performer (king or a richman).

These priests performed various kinds of sacrifices with Vedic hymns, and were supposed, to bind with magic power, the gods and evil spirits and get bliss in favour of the performer and curses for the enemies.

According to Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (II. 4.15),[11] which tells of various kinds of Yajñas (Sacrifices), Agni (fire) is invoked : "Whatever Asuras roam about at will, assuming various shapes, be they large bodied or small bodied, may Agni expel them from the world. Agni is the repeller of the Rakṣas——".

Then the priest makes the performer wash his hands naming himself and his father and great grandfather—as water is considered sacred—binder (rather a magic binder) (Ś. Br. II. 4.2.16).

Atharvaveda, which tells of evil-spirits, even the philosophical conception of 'Asat is employed as a means of destroying the enemies, demons and magicians'.[12] In the same Brāhmaṇa (Ś. Br. II. 4.1.1), after the performance of Agnihotra, he (Yajmāna) approaches Agni, rendering his speech auspicious by invoking earth, water and sky (Vaj. S. III. 37) by means of truth and begs a blessing.

9 Cf. S. Tachibana, *Ethics* Ch. IV for Classification of Buddhist morality.
10 For details Cf. *T.O. Ling*, *B.M.E.* p. 15 ff.
11 *S.B.E.* XII. p 365.
12 Winternitz. *H.I.L.I.* pp. 124-5.

"May I be well supplied with offspring ;———well supplied with men, whereby he prays for men (heroes) ;————well equipped with viands ?——Whereby he prays for prosperity."

Thus the long fire-worship and this small prayer is to evoke blessings from Agni devata.

Thus one hoped to win divine favour through sacrifices.

M. Sylvain Levi, the author of most authoritative work on the subject[13] says regarding the Brahmaṇa theory of sacrifice in 6th and 7th B.C. "Morality finds no place in this system. Sacrifice, which regulates the relation of man to the divinities, is a mechanical act, operating by its own spontaneous energy (par son energie intime), and that hidden in the bosom of the nature is only brought out by the magic art of the priest."

**The Evolution of Sacrificial material**

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[14] and Aitreya Brāhamaṇa (II, 1) allude to the evolution of sacrifices made to Agni (fire) in the Yajñas (sacrifices). In the primitive stage, human beings were killed to propitiate Gods.[15] At a later stage came the turn of animal and bird sacrifice. The Tatteriya Saṁhita (IV. 2, 10 ; I. 4) ; Vaj. Saṁhita (XII 47, 51) , and Atharvaveda (X II. 9) advocate animal sacrifice. And Atharvaveda (XI. II. 24, 25 – XIII. I. 49, 51) tells of categories of birds and animals fit for sacrifice.

This was followed by the conviction that the sacrificial part which left the animals and birds, entered the earth in the shape of corn. Rice, according to Śatpatha Brāhmaṇa and rice and barley, according to Aitreya Brāhmaṇa, provided the sacrificial part.[16]

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (I.7) advocates the efficacy of fivefold animal sacrifice with completeness to the offerings of earth products. Rice is hair, when mixed with water it becomes skin, when consistent it becomes flesh, when baked it becomes bone and when it is be sprinkled with butter, it changes into marrow. This is the completeness which they call animal-sacrifice.

**Buddha and Sacrifices**

In his first sermon at Benaras, called Dharma-Cakra-Parivartana, Buddha took

13 *Doctrine du sacrifice Chez les Brahmaṇas* (Paris. 1898), p. 9. Quoted by R. Davids vide *Buddhist India* p. 241.

14 *S.B.E.* XII. 1, 2, 3, 6-7.

15 Human sacrifice was specially performed in the Rājasuya or the great royal sacrifice performed on the appointed day for the abhiśeka ceremony.
*Ajanta cave. XVIII* pl. 75 (Griffiths. I. 24) depicts a woman accompanied by presenting four children's heads in a salver to a devotee, who is gazing at the head while performing th' rite.

16 Even uptill today the earth-products e.g. herbs, rice, barley, molasses, dhup-wood etc. are used in Yaññjas.

cudgels to eradicate the extreme practices and advocated the middle path. He preached to shun extreme austerities and give-up sense-pleasures.[17]

This was a clear indication towards Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas, who sought heaven through sacrifices performed by their priests, on grand scale and also the severe austerities performed by the devotees for the same purpose. This is known as the first part of the middle path, preached by the Teacher.[18]

Right from the beginning, according to Pratimokṣa, a novice had to utter ten prohibitions, called Daśasikṣapada or Daśaśīla, wherein the first vow is abstinence from destroying life.

In Pāyasi Sutta (DN. II. 352-3), Master Kassapa depricates those who take part in the sacrifice, where oxen are slain or goats or pigs or fowls or diverse creatures are killed to that end. He condemns the part-takers as of "wrong views, wrong intentions, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong endeavour, wrong mindfulness, wrong rapture" and considers such a sacrifice, neither of any great fulfilness, nor of great profit, renown or effect. On the other hand appreciates the sacrifice which is free from bird and animals slaughter (Dialogue. III pt. II. pp. 370-1).

In Kutadanta Sutta,[19] Kutadanta brings 700 heifers, 700 steers, 700 goats and rams to the post to be sacrificed. Buddha condemns the Brahmaṇic ideal of sacrifice (fire, animal, charity etc.) and defining true sacrifice, which leads upto the highest, which is the attainment of Arhatship, says, "When a man, with trusting heart, takes upon himself the precepts : abstinence from destroying life, taking what is not given, from evil conduct in respect of lusts, from lying words, from strong intoxicating maddening drinks———that is a sacrifice better than the open largesse, better than perpetual alms, gifts of dwelling-places ; better than accepting guidance.

In this very Sutta,[20] Buddha narrates the story of king Mahavijit to Brahmana Kutadanta. Here the king gains the highest merit by setting the animals free, which were brought for the sacrifice. In this sacrifice no animals were sacrificed, no ghee or oil, sugar, honey and curds were used, no tiring forceable labour was taken and no forests were cut for the fire-sacrifice. This was free from charity, intoxicating drinks, etc. In the words of Buddha, this was the best sacrifice, based upon true knowledge.

In the discourse to the people of Sāla (Sāleyyaka Sutta. MN. I. 285 ff p. 343 ff), Buddha condemns householders : "......a certain one makes onslaught on creatures, he is cruel, bloody handed, intent on injuring and killing, without mercy to living creatures. . . . .". (Ibid 286, p. 344).

17 *D.C.P. Sutta* (S.B.P. XI).
S. Beal, *Fo-Sho-Hing-I san-King*, 1235 ff p. 174.
18 Cf. My "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". p. 667 (MS).
19 DN. I (*S.B.B.* II 145-6 ; p. 182 ff).
These precepts are a part of Dasa-Sikśapada.
20 *Kutadanta Sutta* vide Buddhakatha, T.R. Singh, pp. 352-62.

In Sammaditthi Sutta (MN. I. 46-47, p. 58), Sariputta, being asked by the monks as to what is skill and what is unskill, replies, "Onslaught on creatures is unskill . . . . restraint from onslaught on creature, is skill . . . . .".

Similarly in Esukari Sutta (MN. II) and Assālāyana Sutta (Ibid), Buddha condemns onslaught on creatures.

In Dīgha Nikaya, the writers in their enthusiasm to preach 'non-injury' doctrine of Buddha have even gone to the extent of not only condemning the Ṛgvedic (III. 18. 3) practice of drawing, blood from one's right knee as a sacrifice to gods, but also have advocated the non-practice of keeping a recluse aloof from offering mustard seeds etc. to fire———a practice not known in Brahmaṇic literature.[21]

**Fire-Sacrifice**

*Fire Sacrifice* was performed by the Brahmaṇas with great devotion (Dhm. p. 392). Buddha, who did not believe in Vedic rites, preferred honour and veneration to one who had true knowledge and had grasped the doctrine. (Ibid 107, 392). Evaluating the fire-sacrifice, he says "If for one hundred years a man should tend the sacrificial fire in the forest . . . ." (Dhm. 107), and if it be offered for the sake of gaining merit, its value does not amount to one-fourth part." (Ibid. 108).

In MN.I (GPTS. p. 103), telling about the austerities performed by him, Buddha says to Sāriputta, that being told by some ascetics that "by offerings come purification or by fire-sacrifices purification is obtained . . . . . that also was done by me."

But this also did not give Buddha the insight which he was seeking.

Similarly, in Balpandita Sutta (MN. I. 167, p. 213), fireworship is condemned.

**Asvaghosa and Sacrifices**

**Sacrifices**

Aśvaghoṣa has referred to Vedic scheme of worship several times in his works. His own father performed various types of sacrifices for his welfare. He was advised by King Śrenya to offer sacrifices, the Dharma of his family and thus achieve the highest heaven (B.X. 39).

As far as animal-sacrifice and sacrificial ceremonies are concerned, he (Buddha), formally objects to it, saying, "I do not care for happiness which is sought at the price of others suffering". (B XI 64). For it does not befit a man of compassionate heart to kill another being, who is helpless, out of a desire for a profitable outcome, even though the fruit of the sacrifice may by permanent, how much less should one act thus, when the fruit is transitory? (B. XII. 65). "It will be wrong to practice sacrifice, in which the fruit is attained by killing another being." (B.XI. 66).

21 R. Davids, *DN. II. pt. I.* pp. 5, 17.

A natural question, one may ask, is "Was Buddha the first one to raise the banner of revolt against Brahmaṇical customs of sacrifices and severe austerities" ? No, he was neither the first nor the only religious leader to do so. For example, even Mahābhārata (I. 3095-nearly XIII 1544, compare 60 ˋ6) which is pre-Buddha, advocates truth and outweighs a thousand sacrifices.

**Sacrifices and Brahmanic Literature**

In Brahmaṇic literature e.g. śrutis in categorical terms preach against sacrifices and advocate Ahiṁsa (non-violence).[22] Similarly, Mandaka Upaniṣad says : Plava hyeḍe adṛidha yajñarūpa ashṭādaśoktam, avaraṁ yeshu karma etachehreya ye bhiṇandanti müddhā jarāmṛtyum te punarevāpi yanti.

"But Frail, in truth are those boats, the sacrifices, the eighteen in which the lower ceremonial has been told. Fools, who praise this as the highest good, are subject again and again to old age and death."

In Chandogya Upaniṣad (III, 1ᴗ, 17), Ghora Aṅgirasa lays great stress on Ahiṃsa, i.e. practicing non-injury to any living being.

Later on in the beginning of 6th century B.C., Mahavira,[23] the founder and reformer of Jainism, known as Nigaṇtha Nataputta in Pali Pitaka, preached boundless love and non-injury (Ahiṁsa Parmo Dharma) for living beings. He denied the authorities of Vedas. No need to add that he was Buddha's contemporary, though a little senior to him in age and religious career.

The other minor contemporary sects which seem to have joined with Buddha are —Ājivakas and Lokayattas who were hostile to ritualistic karma (Vedic sacrifice and other ceremonials) Mahākāli Gosala was the 3rd leader of the Ājivakas. These people had no faith in human efforts and believed in the doctrine of predestination and fate.[24] Similarly, the Lokyattas refrained from performing any of the Brahmaṇic ceremonials, sacrifices and denied the doctrine of permanent soul and transmigration.[25]

Thus it would be amply clear that Buddha was not the only or even the first one to raise his voice against Vedic rites and sacrifices. The germ is there itself in Mahābhārata, and Upaniṣadas. However, the extreme view of non-injury (Ahimsa) to any living being, was developed by Mahavira. In fact, Buddha did not accept this extreme view of Ahiṁsa (non-injury to animals or sacrifice). He only forbade the slaughter of animals or hunting of birds more on humanitarian and ethical grounds, than otherwise. He permitted the use of flesh or meat, as food, in case of emergency.[26]

22 *S.B.E.* XV. pt. II p. 31 (1,2,7).

23 Vardhamana Jñātaputra, lived in 599-529 B.C. Rapson, *Ancient India* p. 22 (Cf. p. 46).

24 For details please see Beni Madhav Barua's article vide *Journal of the Department of Letter.* II. 1920, pp. 1-80.

25 For details please see my 'Aśvaghoṣa and His Times'.

26 Cf. my '*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*'.

**Asceticism and Austerities**

Not only the Vedic and Brahmaṇical cult of sacrifices but all practices, which levied stress on ceremonial rites, as morality had no place in them, were condemned by Buddha. This marked change, wherein, the mastery of the self took place of sacrifice or was rather regarded even superior to sacrifice is found in Āitreya Brāhmaṇa (XI. 6, 4), which records "That,heaven is established on the air, the air on the earth on the waters, the waters on the truth, the truth on the mystic lore (of sacrifice) and that on Tapas".

The nearer we get to the time of Buddha, the greater is the importance attached to Tapa. "Just as the sacrificer was supposed, by a sort of charm, that his priest worked for him in the sacrifice, to compel the gods to attain ends he desired, so there was supposed to be a charm in 'Tapa' by which a man could, through and by himself, attain mystic and marvellous results". One (sacrifice) brought the worldly success, while the other (Tapas) developed super-human faculties.[27]

**Ascetics (from Pre-Buddha to Asvaghosa's Time)**

There is no one single book to give us the data of particular practices of austerities and self-mortification, prevailing in pre-Buddha and Buddha's time. However, a glimpse of these can be had from Udumbarika Siṁhanāda Sutta (DN. III. p. 33 ff) and from the dialogue of Buddha with a naked ascetic in Kassapa Siṁhanāda Sutta (DN. II. p. 223 ff).[28] In the introduction of the Kassapa Siṁhanâda Sutta, Ājivikas, Nigantha, Munda-Sāvaka, Jatilaka, Paribbajakas, Magandika, Tedandika, Āviruddaka, Gotamaka and Devadhammaka are described as the contemporary religious sects in the times of Buddha. All these wandered from place to place and were mendicants.[29]

Udambarika Siṁhanada Sutta and Kassapa Siṁhanada Sutta, tell us of ascetics, who in order to keep their body and mind under control, adopted various methods of self-mortification : "There are some hair-splitters...or plucker-out of hair and beard . . . ., he is a stander-up (rejects the use of seat)... . . .or he is a bed of thorns man (putting non spikes or natural thorns under the skin in which he sleeps), or he uses the plank-bed or the bare ground———or always sleeps on bare ground——— or always sleeps on one side———or he is dust and dirt wearer (smearing his body with oil he stands where dust clouds blow and lets the dust adhere to his body) or is a naked one."

These Suttas tell of twenty-two methods of self-mortification in respect of food, wherein the ascetics are told to be eating from Nivāra-rice, water plants to four kinds

27 R. Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 242-3.
*Intro. Kassapa Siṁhanada Sutta*, DM. II. p. 210.

28 The tradition of Non-Brahmaṇa and Brahmaṇa ascetics is also preserved in Jaina Sutras i.e· Aupapātika Sutra Secs. 74, 76-81, 120 (B.C. Law, *India as described in the early texts of Buddhism and Jainism* pp. 229-230).

29 For details Cf. *Intro to the Sutta*, p. 220 ff.

of filth (cowdung, cows urine, ashes and clay); thirteen in respect of clothing, varying from hempon-cloth, rags, kuṣa-grass, small slabs of wood, blanket of hair (human and horse's tail) to feathers or owls. In addition to these severe austerities, going down in the water, thrice a day to wash his sins, is also recorded.

These austerities seem to have continued and even multiplied by the time of Aśvaghoṣa. He records, that in Bṛgu's Aśrama there were sages who lived on uncultivated food (B. VII. 14) ; lived like birds and ate what they could pick up from the ground, grazed grass, passed their time with snakes, turned into anthills by the forest wood (B. VII. 15) : lived by laborious ponding with stones ; lived on what was husked by their own teeth ; lived on left-over (B. VII. 16) ; offered oblivations to fire with their coils of matted hair, soaked with water and dwelt with fishes, their bodies scoured by turtles (B. VII, 17), some Brahmaṇas were in the habit of lying in ashes, their hair were tuft and were clothed in tree-bark (B. VII. 51).

**Buddha and Austerities**

Buddha, being conversant with various contemporary ascetic austerities, regarding Yoga and Dhyāna of Upaniṣads, himself adopted the same methods, to search his goal of deathlessness. He, experimented with Dhyāna practices and inflicted upon himself a series of mortifications, including the abstention from taking food for full six years at a stretch (Cf. Infra. fln. 32).

In Mahā Siṁhanada Sutta[30] (MN.I), he tells that he lived upon one meal in a day to one meal in fourteen days, remained eater of herbs, fungus of fields——— grass and cow-dung[31]—————.

Being told by some ascetics that the purification is wrought by way of food, he ived upon kola-fruit, exclusively on beans, sesame wild rice and then on one rice, one esame and one bean.[32]

These austerities in diet etc. left him extremely weak,[33] lean, without measure, nd looked like wasted, whithered reeds. His hips took the shape of camel's hoofs, is backbone seemed like a twisted rope. Buddha continues to tell, "As a evered goured uncooked, lying out in the hot sun becomes all hollow and hrunken, became the skin of my head. And when I would have felt at my skin f the stomach, my hand come in contact with backbone——by this coarse action, ith all the painful practices, I did not attain to beyond human things, did not

30 The present author has utilised the translation of *PTS* (pp. 80, 101 ff) and *GPTS* (pp. 98-102) of the Sutta.

31 *J.* 94 tells that fish, cow-dung and other refuge was the food of those unclothed solitary, covered with dust, fleeing like deer from the face of men ascetics.

32 Maha Siṁhanada Sutta (*MN.* (*PTS*) 80, p, 107) tells that he lived on jujbe fruit only. Buddha practised severe austerities for six years before enlightenment (Sn. A. 328 ; L.V. p. 183 ; B. XII. 35).

33 The artists have immortalised the effect of severe austerities on Buddha's physics and have sculptured as well as painted the same in innumerable examples.

obtain the pre-eminence that belongs to the full possession of exalted knowledge and insight". (MN. I GPTS. pp. 101-2). This description of Buddha' austerities is also found in later works. Mahavastu agrees in toto with the above description of Majjhima Nikaya. (Cf. Mhv. II. 123-126).

Lalitavistara's[34] (p. 183) writer, in his devotion to Buddha, records that Buddha knew the futility of Self-mortification, but since he was in search of **truth**, he wanted to experiment and feel and then preach (the world) of its infructious character.

In Tibetan sources (Rockhill, Buddha p. 27) Buddha surpasses all the ascetics in self-mortifications and becomes known for that Mahā Śramaṇas. Aśvaghoṣa, while maintaining the tradition of extraordinary austerities observed by Buddha, (B. XII. 94), says that Buddha did so, thinking that this might be the method by which he may end death and birth. In his yearning to reach "the further shore of the cycle of transmigration, whose further shore is unbounded, he lived by taking only a single jujube fruit, sesamum seed and grain of rice" (B XII 96). It left him with only skin and bones. All flesh, fat and blood was gone (B XII 99). The poet, taking a compromising view, concludes that, "Whatever the body lost as a result of these austerities, just so much was made good again through his mighty psychic power". (B XIII 97). In the end, Buddha realised that severe austerities are suffering in themselves (B VII 20). Mortification, of the body is not 'dharma' (Ibid 26). Since body acts under the direction of mind, so the taming of mind is required (B VII. 27). But mind cannot attain the desired result if it is perturbed with hunger and unbalanced with exhaustion (B XII. 103). One, whose mind is well balanced and serene, develops concentrated meditation, which is essential for the practice of trance. (B XII 105).

Thus realising the fraility of such severe penances and austerities, he gave them up and took milk-rice (B. XII. 111). This is the realisation by Buddha, after starvation. So this explains why he has put such a great stress on food, food-habits and their moderation.

**Food and food-habits**

In Mahavagga (VII) and Kullvagga (XII. 1), Buddha lays down rules to see that Bhikṣus practice moderation in food. With moderate eating Māra can be kept under control (Dhm. 7). Describing the ill efforts of uncontrolled food, it is said, it cultivates sensual lust, sloth, excitement, flurry and non-tranquility of mind. If it has not already arisen or been cultivated it cultivates, when cultivated it excites growth".[35] Sutta-Nipāta (952, 970) condemns greed, even with eyes. At Assapura, Buddha, addressing his disciples, says, "Let us observe moderation in eating, wisely

34 *L.V.* p. 183—ध्यान गोराणां च रूपावचाराणां च देवानां ध्यानविशेषोय-दर्शनादावर्जंन कुर्यामिति ।।

35 *SN.* V. III, VI pp. 85-7.
Cf. *Udana Varga*, Verse 24.

reflecting, let us partake of nourishment not for the sake of pleasure and enjoyment it may yield, nor yet out of ostentation and vanity, but only for the sake of body's support and maintenance, its preservation against untimely decay, its help in living the Holy life" (MN. II. G. P. T. S. p. 139).

Buddha's condemnation of greed for food is recorded in Balpandita Sutta (MN. III. 167. p. 213). "There are, monks ! animals, breathing creatures that are dung-eaters. Having smelt the smell of dung from afar they run up, thinking "we will eat here, we will eat here". Monks ! it is like Brahmaṇas, who run up at the smell of a sacrifice, thinking we will eat here, we will eat there———".[36]

While permitting food and criticizing starvation, Mahabhiṣak (the great doctor) as Buddha is known, he did not forget to lay for his disciples a rule to abstain from eating at forbidden times. In Kitāgiri Sutta (M. II. 473. p. 146), Buddha recommends his disciples 'Vikālabhojanaverannani' saying "I, monks! do not eat a meal at night. Not eating a meal at night, I, monks! am aware of good health and of being without illness and of buoyancy and strength and living in comfort. Come, do you too, monks! not eat a meal at night. Not eating a meal at night—— you will also be living in comfort.

The sixth precept for the novice also prohibits him for eating at forbidden times. (Sn. 399).

All these prohibitions are with a view to maintain good health, which the modern medical science also preaches. Aśvaghoṣa has devoted full one chapter (S. XIV), dealing with food, its control etc. This is in keeping with Niyamas in Buddhism.[37] His expression (B. VI 28) that high standard food (called pure fried by the high classes) does not bestow merit or dharma. Had it been so, then the poor, who could not afford to perform higher forms of Brahmaṇical rituals, would get the bliss of dharma. This is a more practical and explanatory expression. (by Aśvaghoṣa)

Here, one may curiously ask the question : "*Was Buddha, the first one, to preach control of diet and time* ? The answer is simply, "No". Right from immemorable times the custom of keeping fast or living on non-cereal food has been regarded as a sacred and religious rite in India. Śatpatha Brahmana (I. 1.1.7 ; II. 1.4.1) records of upvāsatha or fast-day custom of the Aryans. According to it, the householder performing sacrifice, had to keep fast, one day earlier to the ceremony. The gods, knowing this, are said to descend and dwelt by his side (Up+vās).[38]

36 Brahmaṇas were royal guests in the sacrifices (Yajñas). They were fed respectfully and lavishly in the Śraddhas. (*Apspanda D.S.* II, Manu. III 128).

37 For details please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". Chapter Food and Drinks.

38 Even now-a-days, for performing every Brahmaṇic rite or for the fulfillment of certain desires in India, people keep fast and live on non-cereal food. In certain cases silence is observed, while in all cases, telling a lie is prohibited.

This fast or 'Vrata' of the householder abstained him from eating meat, or in observing silence (in some cases) living on only one cereal or non-cereal meal, at a fixed time (either in the morning, noon or at night). Realising the futility of Brahmaṇical custom of extreme starvation, Buddha, no doubt preached against it. But while preaching it, he was particular to point out that food is to be taken only to upkeep energy necessary for any effort of meditation. He thus wanted people to have simple and nourishing food, taken at appropriate (fixed) time.

**Water (or Bath)**

The common Brahmaṇical belief (even today) is that a bath in a (holy) river can wash away the evil deed that a man has done. Once, being asked whether Buddha had taken bath in the holy Bāhūka river, he replies :

"The Bāhūka, the Adhika
The Gaya, the Sundarika
Sarassati or Payāga
The flowing stream Bahūmati
Can never wash one's blackness white
..............................
A man full of enemity and evil deeds
Remains uncleansed of all his sins and guilt,
Upon the pure smiles constant may,
The pure keep endless holy day,
The pure, by action pure contest,
Their every offering is blest.
Here Brahmaṇa bathe, where bathing cleansing gives,
And make the refuge sure of all that lives,
If clean thy tongue from lying speech,
If living thing thou dost not harm
Takest nothing that is not thine own.
Faithful of heart, as free of mind.
What should'st thou do at far Gaya?
Gaya to thee is just a well. (*MN*. I.G.P.T.S. pp. 40-1).

Thus in Buddhism, the highest water which purifies, is the adoption (bath) of Śila qualities or Daśbala of Patimokha.

Aśaghoṣa, who has referred to nearly all the Brahmaṇic customs in pre-Buddha days, says, "Śuddhodana bathed to purify his body with the waters of the sacred bathing places and his mind with the water of the virtues— — ——". (B. II. 37)

Buddha, denouncing the belief of purification done by water, says, "Those who sprinkle water on themselves to purify their deeds, acting on the assumption that it is

a 'tirtha', in that case too, their satisfaction is restricted to the feelings, for water will not make a sinner pure,'. (B. VII. 31).

Buddha approved of ascetism only insisting that the self-mastery and self-control of the path were highest and best forms of it.[39]

Dhammapada (141) condemns physical torture : "Neither nakedness, nor matted hair, nor dirt, nor fasting (starvations), nor lying on the bare earth, nor besmearing (the body with dust), nor assuming ascetic postures, can purify a man who has not solved his doubts"

Sutta-Nipāta (248) condemns all severe austerities "Neither the flesh of fish, nor fasting, nor nakedness, nor torture, nor matted hair, nor dirt, nor rough skins, nor the worshipping of the fire, nor the many immortal penances in the world, nor hymns, nor oblation nor sacrifice, nor observance of the season, purify a mortal who has not conquered his doubt". Being asked as to what is the course of conduct which is painful now and also brings pain in the future ? Buddha says (MN. II GPTS, p. 184-5) all the Brahmaṇical extreme austerities are such.

"— ———He who gives himself to all manner of painful bodily austerities, ———he comes upon a sorry journey to pain and misery in realm of woe : and this is called that course action which is painful now, also brings pain in future".[40]

In Sattulapa Group Suttas (K.S.I. (S.N.I) 27-28 pp. 39-40) Buddha says: That the five-fold Veda lore and severe ascetic practices, since are armed to win paradise (birth in Brahma world) never can win the taming of body and mind to enable one to pass over the death-realm's confines. On the other hand, if "One leaves all vain conceits is well concentrated lonely in heart, wholly emancipated, lone in the forest dwelling, earnest and strenuous crosses over the Dead-realms' confines".

Divyāvadana,[41] condemns asceticism :

nā nagancaryā nā jatā nā paṅko
nānaçanaṃ sthaṇḍilaçāyika va/
nā rajomalaṁ notkuṭukaprahaṇam
viçodhayen moham aviçiṃakānksham
alamkṛstac cāpi cāreta dharmaṃ dāntendriyh
çantah samyato brahmachari
sarveshu bhuteshu nidhāya deṇḍam sa
brahmaṇah sa çramanah sa çramanah sā Bhikshu
Tai Çrutam ; te saṁlakshayanti
brāhmaṇa pratiśamyuktam atāity.

39 *Intro to Kassapa-Siṁhanāda Sutta* (Dialogue) pp. 207-8.
40 For *Austerities Supra, Asceticism and Austerities.*
41 *Divya* (E.B. Cowell and Neil) 1886 ; p. 339.

## Conclusion

To sum up, it is thus clear that Buddha denounced vehemently the extreme Brahmaṇical views about sacrifice, Tapas or extreme asceticism to the extent of self-torture, starvation to the extent of loosing energy, and balance due to hunger or eating like gluttons. He further denounced, the Brahmaṇic faith in caste system and purification done by water. Contrary to all the severe austerities, Buddha based his religion on inner disposition i.e. morality and virtues. His greatest teaching is the firm faith in Śila and Patimokkha.

It is also true that he was not the first or the only one to prefer virtues or morality to sacrifice. Right from the time of Mahābhārata to the time of Buddha, virtues or morality had been preached and practised in a bit subdued way. The preference given by Buddha and then practised by his disciples and followers, in contrast to Brahmaṇic severe austerities to gain salvation, made morality the banner of his faith. As a result, the common man, who was groaning under the expensive and shackled in the prevalent caste-system, felt a great relief. This caused the popularity and spread of Buddhism, more than any other factor.

## Soul Theory

## (Samkhya System)

It is very difficult to trace the origin of saṁkhya system of philosophy in India. It seems to be very old and have many schools of thought. Chinese sources[42] enumerate eighteen Saṁkhya schools and tell of Varṣaganya as the best known school.

## Evolution

In Ṛgveda 'The hymn of creation' explains the origin of the world, the evolution of existent (sat) from non-existent (asat).[43] "Water thus comes into being first, from it was evolved intelligence by heat. It is the starting point of the natural philosophy, which developed into *Saṁkhya system*. This idea of Hiraṇyagarbha (Golden germ) produced from the primeval waters found in Ṛgveda (X. 121) is even older than the Upaniṣads."[44]

## Upanisads and Samkhya System

In Pre-Buddha and post-Buddha Upaniṣads,[45] there are scattered fragmentary hints, which tell of Saṁkhya views.

42 Takakusu, *BEFE. O*, 1904, 58 Quoted by Johnston vide *Intro B.* fln. I p. LVI.

43 A.A. Macdonell, A, *Vedic Reader*, p. 207.

44 A.B. Keith, *Saṁkhya Phil.*, p. 8.

45 Pre-Buddha Upaniṣads are : Bṛhadārnayaka, the oldest, specially Book I-IV; then comes Taittirya, Aitareya, Kauṣitaki and Kane. The second group, in post-Buddha, is Kathaka, Iśa, Śvetāśvatara, Mundaka and Mahā Narayana (all in Verse); the III group after Buddhism is Praśana, Maitrāyaniya and Mandukhya (*J.R.A.S.* 1899 p. 692).

Chandogya Upaniṣad (VI. 2)[46] explains, all existing objects as a composition of fire, earth and water (Cf. also V. 6-9 khandas). At a much later stage, Maitrāyani Upaniṣad (II. 5, V. 2) mentions three Guṇas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (words).

Buddhi is an important Saṁkhya word and is found four times in Katha Upaniṣad. (Hume. p. 8).

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad mentions Saṁkhya by name. In the passage (I. 6-7) Svabhāva (i.e. the nature of things) evidently means Prakṛti. Infact much developed type of Saṁkhya is found in this Upaniṣad.[47] There are more instances "where the vedanta theory is interpreted in Saṁkhyan terms as in 4.10, where the Prakṛti of the Saṁkhya is identified with the Māyā of the Vedanta". (Hume. p. 8)

Maitri Upaniṣad is pervaded by Saṁkhyan influences. It explicitly refers to Guṇas or qualities with the enumeration of their effects (3.5) and explanation of their origin". (Hume p. 9)

The classical form of Saṁkhya[48] is revealed in Saṁkhyakarika of Içvarakṛśna. It differs vitally from the plan of Katha Upanisad. It realises that there is eternal distinction and separateness (Viveka) between spirit and matter. "So artificial a structure cannot possibly be an outcome of primitive thought and a bridge is provided in the Saṁkhya known to the epic——where the later form of doctrine begins to appear, we find also the spirit as universal, an attitude where purity to the later idea is shown effectively, by its harmony with the conception of nature as one".

The oldest Upaniṣad to discuss the absolute nature of Ātma (Soul), along with its bodily and universal relation, is Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad (III. 4.2 ; 5.1 ; 7.23. pp. 111, 112, 117. Hume).

A real attempt "to think out the existence of the world and the self in relation to the absolute" is made in Katha Upaniṣad. This idea is closely connected with the idea of Ṛgveda. That the world is created by the sacrifice of the universal person (puruṣa), gives rise to unevolved (avyakta), into which it enters as the great self (mahanātma), and thus individualised in a manner common in Brahmaṇical speculation, develops as Buddhi (intellect), mind, senses and object of sense-speculation, elaborated in later Çvetacvatara and Maitrāyani Upaniṣads———".[49]

46 *The Pre-Buddha Upaniṣad*, Hume. 241.

47 This Upaniṣad is older than Praśna and later than Katha. (A.B. Keith, *B. Phil.*, p. 11).

48 A.B. Keith, p. 139.
Classical Saṁkhya is found in works later than Buddhism. *Ibid.*

39 A.B. Keith, *B. Phil*, pp. 138-9.
A.B. Keith, *Saṁkhya System*, Chs. I and II.
According to A.B. Keith (*B. Phil*, p. 138).
Ḳatha Upaniṣad is probably older than Buddhist Philosophy.

Apart from meditation, the common means of reaching the stage, where Ātma (Soul) merges with Parmātma (Brahma or the Great Soul) is through Prajña (intelligence) and knowledge (Kaushitaki Up. (III-6-8), Hume p. 325 ff).

The same idea is expressed in Mundaka Upaniṣad (III. I. 5 p. 374 Hume). "The soul is obtainable by truth, by austerity (tapas), by proper knowledge (Jñana), by the students, life of chastity (Brahmacarya) constantly (Practised)". Telling about the soul it adds, "Within the body, consisting of light, pure is He——".

There is no difference between the individual soul and the great soul, "what is thy fairest form—that of thee I see. He who is yonder person (puruṣa) I myself am he ! (Iśa. Up. 16, Hume pp. 364-5)."

**Buddhism and Samkhya**

In the days of Buddha, the Saṁkhya system of philosophy seems to be in its primitive stage. Some of the conceptions of Buddhism, are very closely allied to those of Saṁkhya,[50] which Buddhism, seems to have borrowed from pre-classical Saṁkhya or there might have been a common source. Epic (Mh. B) is an evidence of the existence of Saṁkhya in an earlier period than Saṁkhya kārikas.

**Parallelism (between Buddhism and Samkhya)**

(1) The most important parallelism is the conception of the relation of the ignorance and Saṁskaras. According to Saṁkhya, the impressions left on the mind, cause to attain new births, until at last the true knowledge is gained. When such a stage is reached, ignorance is destroyed and the possibility of rebirth ceases. The source being cut, the impressions cannot be formed.

Here, the use of the word Saṁskaras is a direct borrowing.

(2) Both the systems lay great stress on the conception of causality, "though there is a great distinction between the Buddhist resolution of it into a series of impressions determined causally and the Saṁkhya conception of nature".

(3) There is common rejection of the doctrine of the absolute, i.e. in Saṁkhya the "essential knowledge is to realise that anything empiric is not I, and of the Buddhist it is essential to free onself from the delusion that there is anything which is or belongs to the self". (Ibid p. 29-30).

"The striking parallelism with the Saṁkhya is the attitude of Buddha towards the end of endeavour. The doctrine of Buddha is full of the saviour of Nirvāṇa[51]—— which is not looked upon as annihilation. The word occurs repeatedly in the text. It suggests that the expression was borrowed from the Brahmaṇical speculations by the Buddhists (A.B. Keith, Saṁkhya Phil., p. 30).

50 A.B, Keith, *Saṁkhya Phil*, pp. 24 ff ; "There is no difficulty in deriving Buddhism from the earlier doctrines of Upaniṣads. (*Ibid* p. 24), A.B. Keith, *B. Phil*, p, 140.

51 For details please see Ch. on Nirvāṇa in my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*".

In Saṁkhya system of philosophy the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems are reduced to two fundamental categories of Puruṣa and Prakṛti (i.e. subject and object) Prakṛti in this system, is storing of three states of tension of three constituents (guṇas) Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. "When there is disturbance of equilibrium, the process of evolution begins". It is the source of becoming or existence.[52]

However, "Buddhism wholly rejects the idea of nature (Prakṛti) as an ultimate reality, whence evolution proceeds and with it the doctrine of Gunas"[53].

If Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad is considered the oldest (J.R.A.S. 1899, p. 692), then the following idea appears to have been borrowed by Buddhism from it.

Bṛhad Up. (III. 2.13) states that different body parts of a person, after death, return to different parts of nature. Only his Karman (deeds) or the effect of work remains : "When the voice of a dead man goes into fire, his breath into wind, his eyes into the sun, his mind into the moon, his hearing into the quarters of heaven, his body into the death, his soul (ātman) into space, the hair of his head into plants, the hairs of his body into trees and his blood and Semen are placed in water, what then becomes of this puruṣa (person)"? Here karma is praised and the Upaniṣad adds. 'Verily one becomes good by good action, bad by bad action'. (Hume p. 110).

This has been out and out borrowed in the Buddhist doctrine (Hume. p. 8) and points clearly to the influence of Saṁkhya philosophy on Buddha.

**Soul (Atma) in Samkhya System**

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (A. Granthamālā Edt. 1138-9, 1141), does not give the idea of permanent soul. But death here is not taken as the final end. Yajña (Sacrificial fire) is depicted the sole cause of birth and a man survives death only by virtue of being born from it : "Yajña becomes the soul of the Yajamāna in the other world and one is born Āhutimaya (S.B. Ibid. 1254).[54]

**Rebirth and Karman (Samkhya System)**

The acceptance of the theory of Karman and rebirth is found in older as well as later Upaniṣads.

Aitreya Upaniṣad which is considered a pre-Buddhist Upaniṣad (J.R.A.S. 1899. p. 692), alludes to 'A self's three successive births'. It (II. IV. 4) tells "———this other self of one having done his work (kṛta-kṛtya), having reached his age deceases.

52 Radha Krishnan, *I. Phil*, p, 425. "Sattva is the Potential Conscious, Rajat is the source of activity and Tamas is the source of which resists activity. They produce pleasure, pain and indifference, the evolution of unconscious Prakṛti can take place only through the presence of conscious Puruṣa' . (Ibid)

53 A.B. Keith, *Saṁkhya Phil*, pp 30.
Cf. A.B. Keith, *B. Phil*, pp, 142 ff,

54 G.C. Pandey, *O. of B* p, 284.

So deceasing hence indeed, he is born again......". It further tells of birth in heaven (Svarga-loka), where one becomes immortal. (Hume).

Taittirya Upaniṣad, which is also considered a pre-Buddhist Upaniṣad (J.R.A.S. 1899, p. 692), tells of different births according to karman (deeds) "......... Either as a worm, or as a moth, or as a fish, or as a bird, or as a lion, or as a wild boar, or as a snake, or as a tiger, or a person, or as some other in this or that condition, he is born again here according to his deeds (karman), according to his knowledge". (Hume, p. 303).

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, which is considered the oldest (specially Books I-IV) Upaniṣad (J.R.A.S. 1899 p. 692) tells (IV. 3-5) that a person, "As is his desire, such is his resolve ; as is his resolve, such the karman (action) he performs and into that he becomes changed".

The theory of karman (deeds and rebirth is given in later Upaniṣads also e.g. in Katha Upaniṣad (I. 34. 5-6) Praśna Upaniṣad (1.9 ff, III. 7, 10) and Iśa Upaniṣad (3, 9 ff).

**Buddha on Karma and Soul Theory**

The philosophical ideas, in the time of Buddha were dominated by the Vedic and post Vedic theory of the existence of soul i.e. the existence of Ātma as a link between one (Eh-Loka) and another life (Par-Loka) according to Karmas.

According to Upaniṣads, the individual soul (Ātma) is not different from the great soul and is the Ātma (self) of the Phenomenal world.[55] (Ahm-Tatmo-asi). It has, thus a permanent identity.

Buddha, however, rejected this idea of permanance of soul. In Parinibbana— Sutta (S.B.E. XI., 63. p. 59) he declares "———whatever is born, brought into being, and organised, contains within itself the inherent necessity of dissolution...how can then this be possible that such a being should not be dissolved ? No such condition can exist: the constituents of a being cannot be identified with permanent self. They are all subject to decay and dissolutions". These views are further confirmed in Puggala-Paññati (Ed. R. Morris p. 38), Pāsādika Sutta (D.N. III. P.T.S.) ; and in Brahmajāla Sutta (DN. I).

Puggala-Paññati, however, records two contending theories viz., Sassatavād and Uccedavāda. As in Sassatavāda as the name implies, the view held is that the soul exists in this as well as future life i.e. and so it is permanent. On the other hand, Uccedavāda believes that the soul exists only in this life. Rejecting both these views, Buddha expounds, that the soul does not exist—neither in this nor in the future life.

Tattra Yvāyam Satthā diṭṭh eva dhamme attānam saccato thetato paññapati, abhisampārayañ Ca attānam Saccato-thetato paññapeti Sassatavādo Satthā tenadaṭṭh-abbo.

55 For details please see Chs. XI & XII in my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*".

Tatra Yvām Satthā diṭṭh eva dhamme attanaṁ Saccato thetato paññapeti Uccedavādo, Satthā tena daṭṭhabbo. (Pug. P p. 38).

In Brahmajāla Sutta (Dialogue, I. 28) Buddha is asked to explain both the views, regarding the existence of the Soul and origin of the belief, "Santi Bhikkhave eke Sāmana-Brāhmaṇa Sassatavāda, Sassatam attānañca lokañ ca paññapeti catuh Vathūhi. Te ca bhonto Samm-Brāhmaṇa Kimāggamma kim ārabha Sassatta-vāda Sassataṃ Attanam ca lokan ca paññapenti eatuhu Vatthuhi ?" D.N.I. 30 p. 12 ff).

To this, Buddha, replies : when certain gods, called unconscious beings, fall from their prestigious position, they are born. First they become householders and then adopt homeless state. The soul and the world arise without cause". (Dialogue I. 29. pp. 41-6).

In Brahmajāla Sutta (Dialouge I. 30 ff) to fellow-brethren and in Pāsādika-Sutta to Cunda (Dialogue III 136 ff), sixteen philosophical views about the Soul are refuted by Buddha. In the end, in Pàsādika Sutta (Ibid. 141), Buddha says "For the expunging of all the comments or opinions concerning the beginning and the hereafter of things, and for getting beyond them, Cunda, I have laid down the four onsets of mindfulness. What are these four ?[56] Herein let a brother as to the body, continue so to look upon the body that he remains ardent, self-possessed and mindful, that he may overcome both and hankering and dejection common in the world. And so to let him continue to look upon feeling, thought and ideas. These I have taught and laid down for the expunging of and the getting beyond all these comments or opinions".

Alagaddūpama Sutta (MN.) and Kathāvatthu I. 242) denounce the existence of self as identical with the absolute in set words.

Thus in Pali works, all the sources agree that Buddha had no faith in the permanent identity of 'Ātma' (Soul).

In Sanskrit literature, Aśvaghoṣa, though in his both the kāvyas expounds 'Nairātama-Vāda' speaks of Tathata in Śraddotpada Śāstra. Nagarjuna further develops the same in his Aṣtasahasrika, expounding that for supreme enlightenment one dwells in Brahma.[57]

Tathta or the existence of True self is a Mahāyāna conception. It tells how at the later stage, such changes in the philosophical thinking were introduced, which had no place in Buddha's original teachings.

Here, however, a caution, seems necessary to be born in mind. Buddha was not the first one to reject the non-entity of permanent Soul. It can be attributed to have its seed in Ṛgveda itself.[58]

56 The four are abstaining from taking life, from taking what is not given, from Unchastity, lying speech and intoxicating liquor, Dialogue II. (*Pāyāsi Sutta*) 327, p. 355).

57 For details see Ch. XI in my '*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*'.

58 A.B. Keith, *Saṁkhya System*, p. 33.

Later on, the Lokayatas School, under the leadership of Keśakamblin also opposed the Vedic and Upaniṣadic theory of Soul. Gita (XVI. 7-8) calls Lokayatas as Asuras. The Lokayatas, being 'dehatmavāda, believe that soul is no other than body and has the attribute of intelligence. Soul and body perish together. The self is a product of matter and is material in nature. Carvaka their founder, is highly opposed to the permanent self and holds that self is identical with body.[59]

**Asvaghosa and Samkhya**

According to Aśvaghoṣa's works, before enlightenment, Siddhartha met two philosopher teachers, Sage Arāḍa and sage Udraka (B. XII 84 ff).

In *Buddhacarita* Sage Arāḍa expounds four successive stages of meditation (dhyānas) (B. XII. 49-56).[60] The highest stage to which the 'dhyānas' lead is called "nothingness" (akincanya). This is a stage when, one skilled in regard to innerself (adhyātmakuśala), "causes his self to cease by his self". "And since he sees nothing, he is declared to be one for whom nothing exists.[61] And like the bird from the cage, the knower of the field (kṣetrajña) escapes from the body and is declared liberated." (B XII. 64).[62]

Siddhārtha criticised and rejected this philosophy, though it was subtle and auspicious. He said, since the field knower (kse‹rajña or Ātma) is not abandoned, though liberated from Prakṛti and Vicāra, "it possesses the quality of giving birth and also being a seed" (B. XII 68-9). Meaning that where there is the existence of soul or Ātman, there ignorance (ajñana), actions (karma) and desire (tṛṣna), the root cause of birth exists (B XII. 73-74) or remains latent in a subtle state.

He further argued that when there is Ātma or the knower of the field (Ksetrajña) without a body, "must be either knowing or unknowing. If it is knowing, there is something for it to know, and if there is something for it to know it is not liberated" (B XII 80). So there is no use of inventing the existence of Soul. (B XII 81).[63]

But Siddhārtha did not completely reject Arāḍaś view and said, "since successive abandonment (Tyāg) is declared to be meritorious, therefore I deem complete success

59 For details please see Ch, XI of my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*".

60 Buddhism also has 'Dhyānas and Prajña'. The parallelism between Buddhist doctrine of trance and Yogasutras is so great that they must have a common origin (Johnston. *Intra B.P. LXI*).

61 *B. XII 63.* किचिन्नास्तीति संपशन्नाकिंचन्य इति स्मृति : ।

62 *B. XII 64* श्रेत्रयो नि:सृतो देहान्मुक्त इत्यभिषयिते ।

"Akincanya or nothingness means the stage when there is awareness of the existence of nothing but the puruṣa or soul, the knower of the entire field of consciousness (Kṣetrajñah)" B.C. Law, *Aśvaghoṣa*. p. 72

63 B XII. 81 अज्ञात इति सिद्धो व: कल्पितेन किमात्मना ।

in reaching the goal to derive from the abandonment (tyāg) of every thing" (B. XII 82).[64]

To conclude, Siddhārtha regarded Kṣetrajña (indvidual Soul), as subject to the condition of taking birth (prasavadharma) and a Bījdharma (having the quality of a seed, with latent power to germinate).

The second important philosopher, whom Siddhārtha met was Udraka, Rama's son. In *Buddhacarita* (XII), he, finding and knowing the defect of consciousness (chetan) and unconscious (jaḍa) or dualism, "found beyond the way of nothingness a way which was characterised by neither consciousness nor unconsciousness". (B XII 83).

This system of Udraka also believed in the tenet of the Soul's existence (B XII 84). Since a man again returns to the world after reaching this point, Bodhisattva, desiring to reach the highest stage, left the sage. (B XII. 88).

The meetings of Buddha with Arāḍa and Udraka (Ramaputta) are also described in Āryapariyesena Sutta (M.N.I. pp 208-210). But the account is very brief. Buddha says that he learnt the plane of 'No-thing' from sage Arāḍa and the "plane of neither perception-nor-non-perception" from sage Udraka.

Thinking that these Dhammas "do not conduce to disregard nor to dispassion nor to stopping nor to tranquility. nor to super knowledge, nor to awakening, nor to Nibbāna, but only as far as the plane of 'No-thing' and "Neither-perception-nor-non-perception" respectively, says Buddha, "So monks I left".

In the words of A.K. Coomaraswamy (Gospel of B. pp 29. 199) : "this was the critical stage when Buddhist and Brahman thoughts parted company on the question of Ātman (Soul)".

Brahmajāla Sutta (DN),[65] as referred to previously, tells of 16 ways in which the recluses and Brāhmaṇas maintained the doctrine of conscious existence after death. In this Sutta Sage Arāḍa's view is expressed as : there are some who believe that the soul is not completely annihilated. "For there is further soul, which, by pursuing beyond idea of form, by the dying out of ideas of resistence, by paying no heed to ideas of difference, conscious that space is infinite reaches up to the plane of infinity of space".

The same Sutta expressing Sage Udraka's views, says "They believe that the whole soul is not completely annihilated......" For there is further soul, which, having passed beyond the plane of infinity of space, knowing that consciousness is infinite, reaches upto the plane of the infinity of consciousness".

Thus it is quite clear that as far as the philosophy of 'No-thing' and neither

64 Ibid. 82. परतः परतस्त्यागो यस्मात्त गुणवान् स्मृतः ।
तस्मात सर्वं परित्याणन्मन्ये कृत्स्नां कृतार्थताम् ।

65 *Dialogne*, I. pp. 43 ff.

perception-nor-non-perception' is concerned, these are mentioned in M.N. and D.N. and have been refuted by Buddha.

In *Buddhacarita*, Aśvaghoṣa has not only elaborated Buddha's meeting with sage Arāḍa Kalama, but by his own superb technique, reminds the readers of the old Brāhmaṇical Saṁkhya authorities like Kapila and his pupils (B. XII. 21) Jaigiṣavya, Janaka, and Vṛddha Pārāsara, who sought liberation by following Saṁkhya path (B. XII. 67). All these names are found in connection with Saṁkhya philosophy in Mahābhārata (XII. 11782, 11785).[66]

Arāda's exposition of the definition of a being, as explained to Buddha, is that "Prakṛti (Primary matter) Vikāra (secondary matter), birth, death and old age, and 'no more' are called the 'Sattva', these are the Being".[67] Prakṛti consists of eight and Vikāra of sixteen Tattvas. (not found in Pali Canon).

Conscious (Sanjña or Chetana) is called the Ksetrajña Knower of the field (deha) and those who meditate on Ātman say that Ātman is the knower of the field (B. XII. 20). The born and contrary are Vyakta and Avyakta (B. XII. 22).[68]

This philosophy regarding a 'Being' is not explained in any of the pre-Sanskrit works by sage Arāḍa to Gautama.

66 "*M. Bh. XII* 843 ff. records Jaigiṣavya's conversation with Sage Asita about Śila in Saṁkhya, and he is mentioned in a list of Saṁkhya seers (Ibid. 11782), which include Vārṣaganya, Kapila and Pañcaśikha" (Johnston. fln. B. XII. 67) Buddhaghoṣa tells of one of Ālara Kalama's disciples Bharandu Kalama (A.A. II 375), a contemporary of Gautama. Bharandu Kalama is referred to as the Buddha-Puraṇa-Subrahamchari (A.I. 277). He was dīgha (tall) and pingala (lcwny) and was named Ālarevi. Kalama was the name of his gotta (Leneage), DA. II 569 (Encyclo, of Budd. 1961, p. 3781) Ālara Kalama was seen by Siddhārtha at Veśali. He had 300 disciples (K.K. Mukerji Anc. Edu. p. 386).
In Buddhacarita, B. met the Saṁkhya Philosopher Arāḍa in Vindhyas (*B. XII*).

67 B XII. 17. प्रकृति विकश्च जन्म मृत्युंजरैव च, तत्वसत्त्वभियुंक्त स्थिर सत्व पुरोहितत् ।
Sattva here means the individual, Corporeal being as opposed to the Kṣetrajña. This usage is common in M. Bh. XI. 7103 (=9090+10517 and 10518) Johnston. fln. of the verse. Sattva is constituted of birth, old age and death. These three are the characteristics of the corporeal aspect of the individual. They keep him in perpetual stage of change. (Ibid)
Prakṛti consists of "five elements the ego principle, intellect and the unseen power". (B XII. 18)
Vikāra consists of the object of senses, the senses, the hands and feet, the voice "the organs of generation and excretion and also the mind". (B XII. 19)
Details of early exposition of 24 material Tattvas into a group of eight called *prakṛti* and a group of sixteen called *vikāra* in Saṁkhya is discussed in Intro and p. 863-872 (J.R.A.S. 1930) (*Johnston fln of the verse*).

68 Avyakta was in reality the Saṁkhya equivalent to the unseen force, attaching the individual to the wheel of the Saṁskara and operating it in accordance with the way in which "Three states of a Being were intermingled in him i.e. in accordance with the state of his moral character'. (*Johnston. Intro. B.* p. LVIII).

Iśvarkṛṣna wrote Saṁkhya Karikas, much later than *Buddhacarita* which expounds twenty-four Tattvas.[69]

However, as stated earlier Mahābhārata gives ample proof of the prevalence of a school, which made this division and the classical age preserved traces of it in the explanation of Prakṛtālya in the Bhaṣyas in the Kārikas and Yogasutras. Moreover its predominance over alternative schemes at one period may be deduced from the fact that, if we add Ātma to the prakṛti group, we have, in essence the nine vaiṣesika dravyas, diś and kala being included in the prakṛti of classical Saṁkhya and Buddhi and Ahaṁakara coalescing into manas". (Johnston Intro. B. p. LVII).

Similarly B. (XII), which expounds Yoga system, finds analogies in two points to the older Yoga teachings. (Johnston Intro pp. LXI-LXII). These are (1) the description of Śila required of the aspirat, might be summary of the teaching on the subject attributed to Jaigiṣavya at M. Bh. XII. 843 and (2) The expression 'Nigrhṇamn Indriyagrāman in B. XII. 48, is found in various passages of Santiparva of M. Bh. In Yoga Sutra, II. 55, where Jaigiṣavya's Sutra is quoted, in Yoga, the functioning of the senses is altogether suppressed.

In MN. III. 298, Buddha refutes a Pārāsariya Brāhmaṇa (i.e. follower of Pañca Sikha) and takes the view that in Yoga the senses are kept under control (Indriya Samvara) and not suppressed, Johnston (Intro B. LXI LXII) here concludes, giving literary evidences that this is the view held by Hinayana. Thus Aśvaghoṣa's exposition of Arāḍa's philosophy depicts the development of Saṁkhya-system between the times of Mahābhārata and classical Saṁkhya.

69 When Iśvarkṛṣna started giving shape to the movement of thought, Prakṛti began to denote the first of the 24 Tattva "In earlier passages the three Guṇas do not enter into the composition of the evolutions of the first principle as is Iśvarkṛṣna's system. They are often called Bhavas, states of a being". (Johnston p. LVIII).
For details please refer Johnston, *Buddhacarita* Intro. p. LVI ff.

# 4

# Deification of Buddha

**Political Background of the Development of Buddhism from Hinayana to Mahayana**

The age that commenced with the coronation of Bimbasara (Buddha's contemporary) C. 545-44 BC. ended with the retirement of Alaxender from India and the accession of Chandra Gupta Maurya C. 324 BC. (PHAI p. 187).

Chandra Gupta Maurya stemmed the tide of Mecedonian invasion in BC. 326 (Ibid p. 264) and was able to knit India into 'one unit', after overthrowing petty Indian states, including Nandas. Not only this, the Persian conquered territories along the Indus were also taken from Seleukus (a general of Alaxender) by him (due to a treaty and as marriage dowry).

Aśoka (the grandson of Chandra Gupta), the next most powerful king of the Mauryan dynasty, ruled over a vast empire. His domination stretched "as far as the realm of '*Amtiyako Yonarāja*' usually identified with Antichos II Theos of Syria (261-246 BC.) and included the wide territory around Shahbazgari (Peshawar District) and Mānsahra (Hazara District) inhabited by Yonas, Kambojas and the Gandhāras" (PHAI, p 307). He ruled over Magadha, Patliputra, Khalatikapavata (Barābar Hills), Kosambi (Lummini-gama), Kalinga, (including Tosalī, Samāpā and Khepimgalapavata or the Jaugaḍa Rock), Aṭavi (the forest tract of Mid India perhaps identified with Ālavi of the Buddhist text), Suvarṇagiri, Isila, Ujjayinī and Takshaśila (Ibid).

Aśoka patronised Buddhism and donated Kashmir to the Buddhists (Sarvāstivādins). In his time Buddhism spread in Central Asian countries in the North and upto Ceylon in the South. But he could not stem the tide of Greeks in the N.W of India in 206 BC, as he was ill-served by his officers (Ibid p. 364).[1]

After the assassination of last Mauryan king, Bṛhadārtha, Puṣyamitra came to power and there started Śunga dynasty. This dynasty ruled over a vast empire including, Magadha, Ayodhya, Vidisa, Jullundhur and Sākala. Puṣyamitra had to

1 For the spread of Buddhism please see my "*History of Buddhism in Kashmir*".

fight with Bactrian invaders. Ultimately he was victorious, drove them out of Magadha and perhaps beyond the Sindhu. (The Age of Imperial Unity p. 95).

Śungas remained in power upto 75 BC. and revived Brahmaṇism. They patronised Bhāgvata cult. But Buddhism, though it had lost state patronage, remained flourishing silently. This is proved by the fine railings around the Sanchi Stupa (originally erected by Aśoka). (Ibid. pp. 98-99).

In 2nd C.B.C. Greeks of the house of Euthydemus and Eucratides crossed the Hindukush (PHAI p. 353) and took possession of Kabul and N.W India.

King Menander—Milinda's (from about 140 to about 115 or even 110 BC) conversion to Buddhism is recorded in Milinda-panho.[2] Caspeiria or Kashmir is mentioned as a province to Menander's home kingdom.[3] This clearly indicates that Buddhism had reached beyond Kashmir in 2nd century BC itself and was firmly established there, as the conversation of Nagsena with King Milinda cannot be taken as of a preliminary stage of Buddhism.

The Greeks (Yu-chihs) ousted Śakas (Scythians) from the oxus. Being expelled from oxus region, the Śakas went to the south and occupied the lower Indus Valley (Ibid pp 436-7) because northern India, at that time, was in the hands of Greeks. (Śakas are referred in Ramayana (I. 54. 22 ; IV 43, 12) with Kambojas and Yavanas). They sought the help of Kuṣanas, who at that time dominated over Afganistan region. The Śaka ruler Azes thus became the protege of the Kuṣanas (PHAI. p 440) and thus paved the way for the spread of Kuṣana rule in India (Cf. PHAI p. 454 ff).

During the period from Aśoka (3rd C. BC.) till Kaniṣka came to power, Buddhism witnessed many ups and downs, but it survived, mostly in N-W India and in its own way, quietly, in the rest of the country. Kashmir, which had become the home of Sarvāstivādins in the days of Aśoka, served as its surviving base.

With the coming to power of Kaniṣka, who ruled over a vast empire, including Gandhāra, and Kashmir to Benaras (PHAI. p 473), Buddhism again became the prominent religion of the state.

Geographically, in the primitive stage, Buddhism remained confined to a few towns and villages situated in the central belt (plains) of India. Aśoka's efforts not only made it popular in India but in countries beyond its frontiers. The discoveries of two Kharoṣti inscriptions, one at Swat[4] and the other at Taxila[5], (2nd half of 1st BC.) incised at the instance of Greek chiefs, tell that the Mahāyana Buddhism, by

2 Milinda (*SBE.* XXXV Infra p. XXIII),
3 Tarn WW, (*Greeks in Bacteria and India*), p. 238.
4 *CII.* Vol. II. pt. I p. 4. *Swat Copper Plate*, Theodoros, the Meridarkh established "these relics of Lord Śakyamuṇi for the security of many people".
5 *CII.* Vol. II. pt. 1 p. 5. "By the Meridarkh together with his wife a stupa was established in honour of (his) mother and father for the presentation of a respectful offering".

this time was not only patronised by the foreign rulers but also was well established in N.W. India.

Kaniṣka embraced Buddhism and showered his munificence on the erection of Buddhist monuments. There is no dearth of inscriptions, coins, monuments, literary records etc. to prove this. Kaniṣka convened the Buddhist Council in Kashmir and got the Mahavibhāṣas compiled with the help of Aśvaghoṣa.[6] Kaniṣka and his successors offered gifts to Saṁgha and to Sarvāstivādins[7] and some times to Mahāsaṅghikas.[8] Aśvaghoṣa was the contemporary of Kaniṣka.[9]

The developmnt of Buddhism (after Buddha's death in 486 BC.) its sects, and philosophical changes which led to the Mahāyana form of Buddhism, have been traced in the following four stages i.e. (i) upto 450 BC, (ii) 450-350 BC, (iii) 350-100 BC and (iv) 100 BC. to 300 AD. We now proceed to discuss this evolution, stage by stage.

**I Stage (History upto 450 BC.)**

Buddha's first lay disciples were the two merchants, Tapussa and Bhallika. They were converted by Buddha by the formulae which contained 'dyad' (two) i.e. Buddha and Dhamma (Vinaya I. 45).[10] The third jewel, 'Saṁgha' was then not in existence.

In the primitive stage i.e. in Hinayana, Buddha is the foremost of the three jewels.[11]

One hundred years after Buddha, a conference was held at Vaiśali, where all the points of controversy (including ten points of difference, with original teachings of Buddha, were discussed. Here, those who condemned the Vaiśālian ten points of difference, came to be known as Mahasaṁghikas and the old Vaiśālians came to be known as Sthaviras.[12]

Mahasaṁghikas' interpretations of the teachings of Buddha had Mahāyānic germ, which later on developed into full fledged Mahāyāna. In the words of A.B. Keith, "Mahasaṁghikas held views in some respects intermediate between the Mahā and Hinā-Yāna" (B. Phil. p 157).

6 Please see my *History of B in Kashmir* for details.
7 *C II. I.* pp 137, 145, 155.
8 *Ibid.* p. 170 (Wardak Vase Inscription).
9 Cf My "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*' .
10 *SBE. XIII.* pp 83-4
Rockhill, *Buddha.* p 34.
11 *Sn. 509* Megha Sutta (SBE. X. p. 84) Gautamı, Dhamma & Siṁgha, Rattansutta (Cullavagga. SBE. X. pp 36 ff. "Buddha's nature is all truth, nothing which be apprehended. It is void, omniprescient, silent, pure and mysterious peaceful." (E.A. Burtt, The Teachings of the compassionate Buddha p. 197).
12 For details see my '*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*' Ch. IX.
13 Takakasu, *Record of the B. religion* by I'Tsing, p XX.

Fa-hein procured a transcript of the original Mahasaṁghika Vinaya and translated the same in Chinese two years later. Mahavastu is recognised as the first book of the Vinaya of Lokottaravādins, a sub-sect of Mahasaṁghikas.

After the Council of Rajgṛha, Mahasaṁghikas made Patliputra as their main centre. Sarvāstivādins settled in Mathura and N. W countries, while Theravādins held Kausambi and all S. Western countries.[14]

The Amaravati sculptures belong to Mahasaṁghikas and their offshoots. They are studded with numerous Buddha images. Archaeologists place them in 2nd C.A.D.[15]

Mahasaṁghikas, for the first time, gave place to the laity in their Dharma.[16] They gave Dharma the first place and Buddha the second place in the three jewels.[17] i.e. Dharma, Buddha and Saṁgha. In Hinayana, on the other hand, Buddha occupies the first place among the three jewels.

This is according to Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (SBE. XI p. 38) of the canon, where the legend of Buddha's teachings to Ananda is preserved : "O Ananda ! be ye lamps unto yourself. Be ye refuge to yourself. Hold fast to the Dharma as a lamp. Hold fast to the Dharma as a refuge. Look not for refuge to anyone beside yourselves."

These sayings of the Buddha are repeated in many Suttas.

In the period under consideration, the real religious adherents were considered to be those who left household life and observed Patimokkha rules.

The place of laity was not yet well defined. The laymen were rather merely the supporters of Saṁgha, than actual adherents of the faith.

The goal of life was *Arhathood* and rarely Paccekabuddhahood but never Buddhahood. Satapatti, Sakadagāmi, Anagāmi and Arhats were the stages of Arhathood. Nibbāna was the state of absolute rest and happiness.

These primitive Buddhists care more for their own salvation (M.P.N. Sutta (SBE XI) p. 114) and not for others. No doubt Buddha himself saved a lot of people, but his disciples could not do so.

During this period, as Buddhism remained confined to Central India i.e. within Magadha's limit and its neighbourhood, the then Buddhist literature is composed in verse and is in Magdhan dialect. In it the traditional sayings of Buddha or of his contemporaries have been reproduced in Pali,[18] specially the Vinayapitaka and

14 N. Dutt, *B. sects in India*, p 11.

15 K.R. Subramanian, *Buddhist remains in Andhra etc*. p. 15.

16 Dr. Ajay Mitra, *An outline of early Buddhism*, p. 90.

17 H.P. Shastri was briefed by Amṛtananda, the right hand man of Hodgson, that in Mahāyana, these three jewels became Prajña, Upāya and Bodhisattva i.e. the spiritual forms of Dharma, Buddha and Saṁgha. These, when transferred to stone or canvas, Prajña becomes a female deity while Upāya and Bodhisattva as male deities. (*Adv. Vajra Sang*. Intro p. XVII and ft. n. 1).

18 Dr. S. Khosla, *H of B in Kashmir*, p 126.

Nikayas, which are main planks of Hinyana (older) cult.[19]

In the plains watered by Ganga and Yamuna the language used was Sanskrit and the Buddhist works of this region tell about the time that followed the death of Buddha, specially about the development of the Mahāyana cult.

Professor A.B. Keith, Professor Venkataraman, Bhikkhu Jñanananda and Professor Nalinaksha Dutt all agree that there are definite traces of Mahāyāna Buddhism even in the Nikayas, compiled about 487 BC.[20]

In the literature of this period, the account of Buddha's life, generally commences with Siddhārtha's retirement to forest for the attainment of Bodhi. Pāramitas seems to be not yet known at that time. There did not exist a separate collection of Jatakas (as we have at present) depicting the Bodhisattva's practices of Pāramitas.[21]

In the absence of contemporary sources in literature or archaeological evidence, it is very difficult to date exactly the beginning of Buddha worship. Mahāyānists claim that Buddha was regarded supermundane and was deified even when he was living.[22] Mahasaṁghika sect belonged to the early Mahāyāna and later Himayana sect. It contained the germs of the conception of Bodhisattva, Pāramita practices and the goal of Buddhahood.[23] D.T. Suzuki has brought forth the points of agreements between Mahasaṁghikas and Mahāyāna.[24]

Sarvāstivāda, which developed side by side with Mahasaṁghikas[25] and was established in N.W. India, helped much in the propagation of Buddhism, in those days.[26]

A study of the early Buddhist literature reveals that the original Buddhism, as preached by Buddha was free from caste system[27] and was rather a code of morality based upon four Truths (Arya Ҫatur Satyani). It had nothing to do with

19 R. Davids holds that the four greater Nikayas (SN, DN, MN, AN) and greater part of the lesser Nikayas (Itv & Sn) are as old as 400 BC and the Vinaya ; M. Vagga and Cullavagga (1—x) as old as 300 BC. (H.O.S. vol. 28) also Cf. R. Davids, B India. p 169). Though the first century after Buddha may not have witnessed the formation of a canon, at least the fundamental stock of its texts for such a canon must have been formed in Vaiśali conference (Winternitz. *HIL. II*, p. 5).

20 For details please Cf. Ch. II of *Māhāyana Buddhism* by N, Dutt (Calcutta 1976).
D.T. Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahāyana* B. pp 249 ff.

21 N. Dutt *B. Sects in India*, pn 237.
The ten Pāramitās or Pāramis, perfect virtues, in Pali are : dāna, (almsgiving) ; śīla, (morality) ; nekkhamma, (renunciation of the world) ; pañña. (wisdom) ; viriya, (energy) ; Adhiṭṭhana, resolution ; mettā or metti, charity *Upekkha*, indifference and equanimity. Each of them is divided into three degrees (Childers Dic. p. 335).
Prajñapārmita Suttas were produced in the beginning of christian era, (E. Conze, Vajraccedika Intro p. 9).

23 Infra. *First Buddha Image*.

24 N. Dutt. *B. Sects in India* p. 268.

25 N. Dutt, *B. Sects in India* p 268 .

26 Cf. My *H. of B in Kashmir*.

austerities, asceticism, worship, prayer and invocation to 'Lords' saving grace. It was in those early days merely a spiritual practice of self-effort.[28]

With reference to state patronage in the propagation of Buddhism, in these early days Mahavaṁśa commentary and Manjuśrimūlakalpa refer to Ajatśatru's[29] (Bimbasara's son) interest. His interest in Buddha is evident from the fact that he built a stupa over the remains of Buddha.[30] This stupa was worshipped by Lichchivis of Vaiśali, Śakyas of Kapilvastu, Bullias of Allakappa, Koliyas of Rāmayana, Brahmaṇas of Ved dvipa, Mallas of Pāva, Mallas of Kuṣinara and Mauryas of Pipplivana.

However, the work of the propagation of Buddha's teachings seem to have been mainly done by Saṁgha or Buddhist wandering monks, and Viharas ; which in the first stage were meant for the stay of wandering monks during rainy season only, and later on became the important meeting centres of learned itinary monks who held philosophical discussions and discourses here and thus converted them into centres of learning also.

To sum up, the original teachings of Buddha, just after his demise, received wide publicity and interpretations. After the first Council at Vaiśali, Mahāsaṁghikas (originally Hinayanist) who separated themselves and condemned the old Vaiśalians[31] ten points of difference can be regarded as fore-runners of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The relic worship began just after the demise of Buddha.

## II Stage (450-350 BC)

The period between 450-350 BC is a period of Hinayana Buddhism. Buddha, in this period, is regarded as a human being, who by exertion, sustained through many a births, attained the position of a teacher. It was believed that there were six Buddhas before him and one would follow him. Combinedly they are called Manuṣi Buddhas.

Infact Sarvāstivādins, like Theravādins, conceived Buddha as a human being. They, magnified the qualities of the Teacher so much, that one is led to believe their

27 Sn. 135, 141.

28 D.C.P. Sutta. (*SBE*, XI. p 147).
Ibid (DN. II. 156 ; Dialogue p. 173)
Cf. *Visuddhi Magga.*
M.P.N. Sutta. (*SBE. X*) "Decay is inherent in all component things ! work out your salvation with diligence" (p. 114).

29 Ajatśatru ruled for 32 years from 493 BC. Buddha died in 486 BC. the eighth year of his rule (N. Dutt, *B. Sects*, p 1).

30 *DN* (*H. Lucknow* 1979) Rahulji, p. 151. Bigandet, Gaudama II, p. 91 ff. This account of Bigandet is directly taken from the Comy of M.P.N. Sutta. J. Thomas vide *Life of Buddha* fln. 3 p. 159 tells that a similar story of procuring the relics, by Ajatśatru is found in Divya 380.

31 Full account of the Vaiśali Conference is given in *Vinaya* (II. 299 ff) *Mahavamśa* (IV, ff). But both the accounts differ in many respects (DPPN. fln. 2. p 755) Cf. My "*H of B in Kashmir*" and "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*". Ch. IX for details.

conception of Buddha as that of a super-human being.[32] He is depicted as to possess the powers which were unattainable by others.

After Buddha's Nirvāṇa, his ashes were distributed among his disciples of eight different tribes.[33] Bullis of Allakappa, Koliyas of Rāmagāma, Licchavis of Vaiśali, Mallas of Pâva and Kuśinara, Moriyas of Pipphalivaṇa, Śakyas of Kapilvastu, Magadha and Brahmaṇas of Veṭhadipa. They all built monuments ; (a stupa or a chaitya) over the relics in their respective countries and showed all kinds of respect, reverence, honour and worshipped them. Each of these Chaitya or stupa was established with great festival, in honour of these relics.[34] This marks the beginning of worship of Buddha's relics.

**III Stage (356-100 BC)**

Between *350-100* BC. the spread of Buddhism was quite phenomenal. This was the period of king Aśoka, who made Buddhism as the state region, after his conversion. Due to his efforts, Third Buddhist Council was convened at Patliputra.[35] Here Theragāthā canon of true adherents of Buddha was compiled. Kathavatthu was also compiled and incorporated with the canon.

This canon or Pitaka of three baskets (Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidharma) was taken to Ceylon by Mahinda, Aśoka's son, and a pupil of Moggliputta Tissa by another tradition (Mahavaṁśa H.P. 13)[36] for the propagation of Buddhism.

Not only the Abhidharma, literature, but also the Jatakas were developed during this period.

Aśoka sent Buddhist missions to North and 'South. But the most important was the mission to Kashmir. Here Buddhism was established with the efforts of a Buddhist monk of Varanasi : Majjhantika (Mahavaṁśa (H) XII. p 60). This mission of Majjhantika, receives confirmation in the Tope 2 of Sanchi group discovered by Cunningham.[37] Here is inscribed in letters of 3rd C. BC, on the innerlid of the relic-urn 'Sapurissa Kāsapa Gotas Sarva hemavatācharivasa', the teacher of all the

32 (Ref. PLATE-I....).
The sources of this period are mainly Vinaya Pitaka and four Nikayas N. Dutt, B. Sects in India, p 260.

33 *Dialogue* (*DN*) II. p 167.
*M.P.N. Sutta* (*S.B.E. X*) pp 124-36
Tibetan Sources (Asiat. Res. XX p 316).

34 "Mallas paid honour to the relics with dancing, singing and music with garlands and perfumes". *Kern*, *M B.* p 45.

35 Its account is not found in Cullavagga. For the first time it is mentioned in Dipavamśa, then in Samantapasadika and then in Mahavaṁśa. (A. *Kauslayana*, *Mahavamsa* (H) p. 21).

36 *Winternitz*, *HIL. II* p. 9.

37 Fordetails please see Ch. II, my *History of Buddhism in Kashmir*.

Himalaya region (Bhilsa Topes pp 75-6). This confirms that if not earlier, Buddhism reached Kashmir and beyond at least in 3rd C. BC.[38]

Aśoka's edicts have been discovered from Shahbazgari and Mansehra. They mention of Yonas, Kambojas and Gandhāras. He constructed a large number of Viharas, stupas etc. in Kashmir (Rājat, I. 102-3). Yuan-Chwang testifies to the presence of these monuments and he saw here, four high stupas of Aśoka's time each containing above a pint the body-relics of Buddha.[39]

Aśoka 273-236 BC is said to have opened up seven out of eight original stupas, erected over the body relics of Buddha. He distributed these relics and built monuments all over his empire (Debla Mitra, Sanchi, p. 5). According to tradition (Divya, Cowell and Neil, p 379) he is famous for erecting 84000 stupas, topes or cupolas. Yuan-Chwang, without counting the legendary 500 convents in Kashmir, and other finite groups in other parts of the country, mentions more than eighty-five stupas and monasteries.

His most famous monument uptil today are pillars at Sanchi, Sārnath, Delhi (Near Kutab-Minar), Rumindei, Nigiliva (near Nigiliva village in Nepal Tarai) and Bhārhut.

Sanchi[40] Stupa and a monolithic pillar are very famous. As the stupa was damaged, it was completely repaired in the middle of 2nd C. BC. The plan and the form of great stupa was enlarged in Śunga period. They are the same uptil now (Debla Mitra, Sanchi p. 16).

The Art in (2nd-Ist C. BC) represented at Sanchi is mainly narrative. Its main purpose was to propagate Buddhism by depicting scenes connected with Buddha and his life, i.e. Jatakas, scenes relating Manuṣi Buddha etc. But it never represents Buddha in human form. At certain points Buddha's presence is indicated by symbols, associated with him i.e. a throne, umbrella, Bodhi tree, footprints etc.[41]

As in Sanchi, so in Bhārhut[42] Stupa, Jataka scenes are depicted but in abundance. Moreover, they are not so much full of details as compared with five Jataka scenes on the gateway of Sanchi (Debla Mitra, Sanchi, pp 23, 25 ff).

"The Stupa itself is covered with a coat of plaster, in which hundreds of triangular shaped recesses had been made for the reception of lights to illuminate the

38 Cf. my *H of B in Kashmir Ch. II.*
Milindapanha (written in C.I. CBC) records the discussion between King Milinda (140-110 BC) and Nagasena at a place 12 Yojanas from Kashmir (Milinda SBE XXXV p. XXIII, N. Dutt, MB, p. 4).
39 Watters, *Y-Ch, I*, p 261.
*Si-Yu-Ki*, p. 189.
40 Sanchi (Lat. 28, 29 N, 77°, 55 E) in Bhopal State (V.A. Smith' *Aśoka* p. 210).
41 N. Nath and J.P. Saxena, *Archaeological Museum Sanchi*, 1981 p. 7, Debla Mitra, *Sanchi*, p. 21.
42 Bharhut is in Nagod State of Bhagelkhaṇḍ (Maḍhya Praḍeṣh) about ninety miles SW of Allahabad. (V.A. Smith, *Aśoka*, p. 113).

monument." This points to Buddhist custom of worshipping their monuments (V.A. Smith, Aśoka, p. 113).

As Buddhism in this period had crossed Madhyadeśa and with the efforts of Aśoka had reached Kashmir and Ladakh in the North and Ceylon in the South, it underwent some remarkable changes. No doubt the doctrine remained the same in essence but changed in interpretations.

Buddhism, which had split up in 18 sects, after Nirvāṇa of Buddha, established itself in three main centres (1) Theravādins in Vaiśāli, Kauśambi and later on in all S. Western countries (2) Sarvāstivādins in Mathura and N. Western countries (3) Mahasaṁghikas (basically Hinayanist) in Patliputra.[43]

Another notable feature of this period is the fact that Buddha's life account in the works now onwards and during this period also starts not from his retirement (as depicted in earlier works) but the prophecy made by Dipaṅkara Buddha. To this and the story of Buddha's descent from Tuṣita heaven was now introduced. Thus the seed of the conception of making Buddha as an Avatār was sown, though his image-worship did not start. Similarly during this period, greater importance was attached to Jatakas and Avadānas. These works centre round the previous births and present life of Gautama. They also attach importance to Pāramitas (greatest acquisition) of virtues, like dāna, śīla, kṣanti, virya, jñana, prajña-bala etc.). These six Pāramitas became later on ten in Theravāda, including Upayakauśalya, Praṇidhana, Bala and Jñana. (For the first time they are mentioned in Daśabhumika Sutta. (N. Dutt, B. Sects p. 239).

Aśoka's edicts, so innumerable, speak only of heavenly life and happiness. Thus the conception of hell and heaven was introduced, which does not agree with Buddha's original teachings of 'Nirvāṇa'.

In older literature (i.e. previous to 300 BC), e.g., M.N. (108) tells us that originally there was no head of the Saṁgha organised by Buddha. It was an independent democratic set up. But according to Aṭṭaśalini (p 32) Tibetan and Chinese sources, the idea of patriarchal succession was introduced. Abhidharma Nikaya traces the list of Ācaryas from Śariputta onwards (N. Dutt, B. Sects, p. 250). This further led to a change from Buddha Bhakti to Ācarya or Guru Bhakti.

**IV. Stage (100 BC—300 AD)**

Between the period 100 BC to 300 AD, Mahāyana characteristics developed in Buddhism.

Aśoka's patronage to Buddhism had already opened its portals in the central Asian countries. Buddhism spread in Tibet and Ladakh, Khotan (3rd-2nd C. BC) and China (181 C. AD). With the coming of Kaniṣka to power, Peshawar (Kaniṣka's capital), and Kashmir, (where he convened the Buddhist Council), became

43 For details please see my "*History of Buddhism in Kashmir*".

the main centres for further development and spread of Buddhism.[44] But in this process of reaching north-western regions, the doctrine became flexible, as the population was a mixed one, due to foreign invaders and their domination. As a result, Buddhism ceased to be purely an Indian religion and became complex in structure, in which Greek art, Iranian dualism, philosophy of Madhyadeśa and the old Magdhan elements etc. all had their place.

As already pointed out, the Jatakas and Abhidharma literature had been very well developed by this time.

The effect of these was the introduction of the conception of Bodhisattva.[45] The object of Avadānas was to show that the devotees sacrificed everything, even their lives for perfection in one of the Pāramitas, not for any earthly gain, but for gaining Bodhi and rescuing all beings from misery. Aśokāvadana (150 BC—100 BC) expresses the decline of Arhat-hood for the first time. This is further corraborated in Kaniṣka's Council. According to Yuan-Chwang 499[46] Arhats, who formed the assembly, first refused to admit Vasumitra, because he had not still attained emancipation. The latter, however, declared that he cared very little to acquire the benefits of Arhatship, and his aim was to become a Buddha (enlightened one).

In Divyāvadāna (p. 473) Rūpmati makes sacrifices with the motive of attaining Buddhahood.

In Mahavastu Avadāna (III 278-280, p 266)[47] Bodhisattvas are exalted (III. 280) and great honour is bestowed upon those who are desirous of the knowledge of Buddha (III 278, p 266). The idea of saving others is upheld. "Those who saccoured the poor with their wealth will do reverence to Buddha when they hear this Sutra" (Mhv. III. 278, p 266).

The idea of Buddhahood was introduced in order to save the disintegrating Dharma. It is very clear in Mahavastu (II. 278, p. 266). "Those who upheld the true Dharma of the saviours of the world, when it was disintegrating, and who renounce gain and reputation, will also be gladdened." Mahavastu (II. 260-63, p 244-8) speaks of the practices and powers of a Bodhisattva. (Mhv. II. 263, p 248) goes to the extent of assigning sixteen characteristics to the spot of earth in which Bodhisattva settle and destroy the great Yakṣa etc. Thus in short, Mahavastu refer to devotees developing Bodhicitta and aspiring for Bodhisattvahood. Here a Bodhisattva is assigned a very high, dignified and exalted position.

Aśvaghoṣa, in *Saundernanda*, has also depicted the same idea, and even goes to the extent that he has made it the very cause of writing this *Kāvya* (S. XVIII 63-64).

44 For details please see my *H of B in Kashmir*.

45 For details please see Hardyal's '*The Bodhisattva Dotrine*'.

46 For details please see my *History of Buddhism in Kashmir*. Ch. II. In Theravāda the emphasis is levied upon the attainment of the status of Arhat, through self-protection. In Mahāyāna, it changes to that of a Bodhisattva, a saint, who vows to the liberation of others, before he will attain his fully merited Nirvāṇa. Infact, Mahāyāna bases its philosophy on Prajña/Karuna, wisdom/compassion (*The Middleway Journal*, p. 189).

47 Tr. *J.J. James*.

In the words of H.P. Shastri,[48] "The doctrine of Śunyavāda or spiritual nihilism of Nagarjuna has not yet been developed, while the idea of saving others and not being contented with the saving of one's own soul, differentiates Aśvaghoṣa's doctrine from the older Śravakayāna,[49] which remain contended with his own salvation only".

The Tibetan historian Taranatha also records the decline of Arhat by the time of Kaniṣka. He discusses diverse views and records that the assembly of Kaniṣka was composed of 500 Arhats, 500 Bodhisattvas and 500 ordinary Pandits etc.

The conceptions of Bodhisattva and the practice of Pāramitas[50] are Mahāyāna traces found in Mahasaṁghikas, Sarvāstivāda and their off-shoots. (N. Dutt, B. Sects p 268).

**The Conception of Soul**

Buddha preached Anātamavāda or the non-existence of soul or the permanent identity. Contrary to his teachings, there developed in this period the theory of Tathata i.e. the soul of the universe. His nature and His attributes. Aśvaghoṣa is the first Buddhist writer to expound this theory in his famous Mahāyāna work Śraddotpāda Śāstra.[51]

The idea of the conception of human soul is also referred to in Sutta Nipāta,[52] thus bringing the changed Buddhist philosophy again nearer to Upaniṣadic "Soul Theory".

Another very important new addition to the Buddhist philosophy during the period (600 BC to 300 AD) is the concept 'Tri-Kāyā', viz., (i) Dhammakāyā, (ii) Rupa-Kāyā and (iii) Sambhog-Kāyā, an important characteristic of Mahāyāna Sect, we proceed to study the evolution of each of these three Kāyās of Buddha.

**(1) Dhamma-Kaya**

In early Hinayana, Buddha was regarded as an ordinary human being. D.N.[53] is quite clear about it. "Bhāgava arhaṁ sammāsambuddho Vijjācaraṇasampañño

48 H.P. Shastri, *S. Kavya*, preface p. XXI.
49 Śravakas gain knowledge by hearing (*Ibid.* p. XXXII).
50 Refer *Ch. I of this work* for details.
51 For details please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*" Ch. XI.
52 "The term Koṣa mentioned in *Sutta-Nipāta* (No. 525) is of Upaniṣadic origin—it conveys the sense of the so-called sheaths or bodies of the *ātman* or soul in the Upaniṣadic psychology. SGM Weerasinghe,"Some Aspects of Pre-Buddhist Philosophy as reflected in the Sutta-Nipāta' p. 41 vide reprint from Kalyani. Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences of the university of Kelaniya Vol. II. 1983. (This paper was read by the author in the first International Buddhist Conference held at Delhi in October 1984). Sn. 525 Conveys the idea of soul of the universe.
53 *DN. I* pp 87-88, Cf. LV. p 3 Sad. P. pp 144, 376. N. Dutt, *Mahāyana B*, pp 142 ff.

lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devanussānam buddho bhāgave. So imaṃ lokam sadevakaṃ sabrahmakaṃ Sasamaṇa·brahaṇām pajaṃ sadevaṃ sayaṃ abhiñña racchi kalvā pavedeti. So dhammseti ādikalyānaṃ, . . . .".

Here the Hinayanists recognise Buddha as an Arhat, i.e., a fully awakened one, and do not attach any transcendental or theistic element to him.

But in later Hinayana, getting a hint from (a) Mahāpari-Nibbāna Sutta[54] IX where Buddha tells Ananda that the "Truth and the rules I have set forth and laid down for you, let them, after I am gone, be the teacher for you ;" with slight indecipherable changes found in other Pali works,[55] where Buddha is spoken identical with Dhamma, Mahasaṁghikas and Sarvāstivādins put forth the theory of Dharamkāyā. In D.N. III 84 (p. 81), 'Dhammakāyā,[56] is 'Norm body'.

The same idea is brought forth in a conversation between Śakyamuni and the Brahmaṇa Droṇa in Añguttara Nikaya.[57] Brahmaṇa Droṇa noticed the sign of wheel (Chakra) in the feet of Buddha and enquired whether he was a deva, a gandharva, a Yakṣa or a man. The blessed one replied that as he had got rid of asvas (impurities) he was none of these but a Buddha. This clearly indicates that Buddha attached no importance to his outward form (Rūpa) but to inward awakening i.e. Bodhi or 'Dharma'. He was not only Śakyamuṇi but a Tathāgata or Dhamma.[58] Vajraccedika (p 1-90) also confirms this view. Buddha says to his disciples :—

"Who by my form did see me,
And those who followed me by voice,
Wrong the efforts they engaged in,
From the Dharma should one see the Buddha,
For the Dharma bodies are the quades,

54 *D.N. II.* 154 ; *Dialogue* p 171.
SBE *X.*

55 *MN. III. (Gopaka Moggallana Sutta)* Tr. p 60,
*MN. I* pp 190, 191.
*SN. III.* p 120.
Cf. *Saddhamma Sangha (JPTS.* 190) Ch. X p 65.
Buddha says "84,000 dhamma khandas have been preached by me in forty-five years. I alone only pass away, while these are dhammakhandas, which like 84,000 Buddhas (Buddha-Sadisa), will admonish you."
*N. Dutta, Mahāyāna B, Ch. VI.*

56 Buddhaghoṣa says :
"Because, having devised the three Pitaka, Buddha word by his mind he conducts it forth by his speech. Therefore his body-form, having Normness (dhammata) is considered as the Norm and is so called. And just because of this Norm-bodyness, he has an excellent body. For Norm is called Brahma in the sense of the best, superman, excellent—thus for the exalted one, having spoken in terms of values, goes to speak. . . . . . '.
*Dialogue III 84, p 81, fln. 2.*

57 *AN. II.* p 38.

58 The nature of Tathāgata is Dhamma—he is really Dhamma.
*DN. III.* fln 2, p 81).

Yet Dharma's true nature should not be discerned,
Nor can it, either, be discerned".
"Whosoever says that the Tathāgata goes or comes or
stands or sits or lies down, he does not understand
the meaning of my teachings. . . .".

(2) **Rupa-Kaya (or Nirmana Kaya)**

In Hinayāna, Divyavadana[59] records the idea of Rūpa Kāyā (Buddha's body) and Dhammakāyā (the doctrine of Law as his soul) or the reality (Tathata). Smadhirāja Sutta prefers Dharam Kāyā to Rūpa Kāyā.[60]

The early Mahāyāna doctrine, found in Aṣtadaśahasrika Prajñapāramita, including that of Mādhyamika (Nagarjana's school), also speaks of two Kāyās (1) Rūpa-Kāyā and (2) Dharma-Kāyā.

(3) **Sambhog Kaya (The Body of Bliss)**

The Mahāyānists, in addition to Rūpa Kāyā and Dharma Kāyā introduced the concept of Saṁbhog Kāyā for the benefit of all the Bodhisattvas. "It is called 'Parasambhog Kāyā', as distinguished from 'Svasaṁbhog-Kāyā,' a similar subtle body perceived by the Buddhas alone. It is this (Parsambhog Kāyā) which plays the role of preacher of the various Mahāyāna Sutras......".[61]

According to Śata Sāhasrika and Pancaviṁsati Sāhasrika[62] it is exceedingly refulgent body. From every pore of it streamed forth countless brilliant rays of light, illuminating the lokadhatus as innumerable as the sands of Ganges. When this body stretched out its tongue, innumerable rays of light issued forth from it and on each ray of light was found a lotus of thousand petals, on which was seated a Tathāgata Vigraha (an image of the Tathāgata, a sort of Nirmaṇkāyā, preaching to Bodhisattvas, gṛhasthas (householders), Pravrājikas (recluses) and others, Dharma consisting of six Pāramitas.

Though Boddhaghoṣa's conception was realistic, he was not immune from the religious bias of attributing super-human powers to Buddha. In Aṭṭhaśalini (p. 16) he says, when Buddha was away in Tuṣita heaven, teaching Abbhidhamma to his mother, he created some Nimmita-Buddhas, as exact replicas of himself in voice, words and even rays of light issued from their body. (N. Dutt, Mahayana B, p. 147).

In the words of Peter Sharp,[63] who takes Sun as the example "......the Sun's rays, phenomena on earth and the way they interact. The sun corresponds to the Dhammakāyā (the body of Buddha's Law), which generates all heat, light, energy and

59 *Divya* (Cowell and Neil) pp. 19 ff
60 N. Dutt, *Gil. Mss*, II, p XII.
61 N. Dutt, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 162.
62 *Sat* pp. 8-29 ; *Panca*, pp 6 ff (quoted by N. Dutt, *Mahāyā ıa B*, p 162 fln 2).
N. Dutt has discussed all the aspects of three-Kāyā conception in *Mahāyāna* B. Ch. VI.
63 *The Middleway, Journal*, Feb. 1982, vide The Mahāyāna p 190.

power. The Sun's rays correspond to Sambhoga Kāyā (the body of bliss), which transmits all these benefits from the Sun to the earth's surface. Lastly, all phenomena upon this planet (including ourselves), which are sustained by and are utterly dependent upon the life-giving benefits of the Sun, brought through the medium of its rays, correspond to Nirmāṇa-Kāyā (the body seen on the earth). The teaching is that the Tri-Kāyā is the true nature of all phenomena. So the Mahāyāna may be seen very much to emphasise that Buddhism is the supreme totality of religion. In that, there is no call for the concept of a separate god or of enduring, personalised man. All is one. This is superbly brought out in the teaching of Sunyata (the state of emptiness) which is nothing more or less than the basic Buddhist doctrine of añña (no separate self), progressed and positively apotheosised into the void in the specific sense of being utterly devoid of any sense of separateness, whatever, and thus complete totality, Nothingness, Reality, all the terms are for the absolute".

Aśvaghoṣa in his *Śraddhotpada Śāstra*, has selected the term Tathata or Reality to discuss the Mahāyāna view about the conception of absolute.

Though the expression Samboga-Kāyā does not appear in Mahavastu, yet the seed of Nirmaṇa Kāyā is found in this work. Here Buddha is given miraculous power of sending emenations from himself, exactly like himself and calls the Nirmaṇas[64] in chattarvastu Avadāna. This may be called the beginning of the penetration of Kāyā doctrine in the realistic conception of the Historical Buddha.

Aśvaghoṣa, in his both the Kāvyas, unassumingly magnifies Buddha's qualities of head, heart and physique and develops the idea of supernatural powers in the Master. He has, says Suzuki,[65] incorporated the idea of Tri Kāyā conception in the Awakening of the Faith and "Every thing Aśvaghoṣa treats must be considered merely a recaptulation of the doctrine, which were not only formulated but firmly established in the Mahāyāna faith long before him——. His merit lies in compilation and systematisation".

The Tri Kāyā concept as described in Aśvaghoṣa's works,[66] later on developed and became an important feature of Mahāyāna.

To sum up, this period (100 BC to 300 AD) witnessed great changes in the original teachings of Buddha e.g. (i) relaxation in stern Vinaya and Dharma rules; (ii) the introduction of the theory of Tathata; (iii) the theory of Śunyavāda[67] in

64 *Mhv. I* 226. p 220 ff.

65 D.T. Suzuki, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp 247-7, 2170. Three Kāyās are:

(a) Nirmaṇa Kāyā i.e. the human body of transformation i.e. Śāya Sinha a Nirmaṇa-Kāyā emenating from universal Dharmakāyā.

(b) Sambhoga-Kāyā, the body of enjoyment.

(c) Dharmakāyā, the spiritual body of bliss of Tathāgata, refulgent body. 'In fact Dharmakāyā is absolute, others are mere emenations from it and are ultimately absorbed in it'.

Suzuki in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Ch. X. pp 242-276 discusses the three Kāyā conception of Buddha.

66 *B.X* 57——त्वयं संश्रये श्रये (Buddha is refuge).

97 *B. X* 60——धर्मंचर्यया...धर्मादृत: (Dharma is refuge).

addition to 'Dukha, Anitya and Anata' ; (iv) the introduction of the conception of hell and heaven in contrast to Buddha's teachings of 'Nirvāṇa' ; (v) the introduction of Tri Kāyā Conception ; (vi) the supremacy of Bodhisattva in place of Arhat etc. All these changes may be due to political, social and ambitious aspirations of Buddha's disciples-but as a result of all these, Buddhism became flexible, leading it gradually from Hināyāna to Mahāyāna. However, it must be clearly understood that Mahāyāna is not the development of only one century. Its seed can be traced in the Rajagṛha Council itself ; it sprouted in the Vaiśali Council ; its branches and leaves grew in Aśoka's Council and it developed into a fully grown tree in the Kaniṣka's Council. Aśvaghoṣa's *Śraddhotpada Śāstra* is the first Mahāyāna work.

**Avatar Conception and Buddha**

The conception of Avatār (the god decending on earth, in the garb of a man, to relieve men of misery) is very old in India. In Ramayana, Rama is the Avatār of Tretayuga, who took birth to destory demons, including Ravaṇa.

Similarly in Mahābhārata, Krishna is considered as an Avatār of the age, with all round activity, emotion, action and knowledge.

If Lord Krishna's words 'Dharma Saṅsthāpnārthāye Saṁbhavami Yuge Yuge',[68] is taken in consideration, then there is no limit of Avatārs or number of forms, the supreme being can assume.

In SN,[69] a rule is laid that he who takes refuge in Buddha, is released from danger. It indicates that Buddha was the supreme authority, who protected the good from danger.

This expression is quite analogous to Gita's śloka (IV. 8). Rather it appears to have been borrowed from there itself.

**Buddha Avatar**

Right from Acchariyabbhuta-dhamma Sutta (MN. III) down to Buddhacarita, all records agree that Buddha, before his birth in the family of Śuddhodana, lived in

67 *L.V*, (Lefmann), 1902 p 419

जिह्वापि काय मन दुःखा अनात्म (अपिरिक्त स्वभाव) शून्य ।

Abhidharmakoṣa of Vasubandhu (*Ed. Rahulji. 1988 BS*) in Chs. VI & VII discuss the theory of 'Śunya as devoid of Ātman, puruṣa etc.

*Divya* (Cowell and Neil) pp 266, 367. Anitya Dukha Sunya Anātma. Dulva tr. from Alaxender Csoma's Anal by H.H. Wilson, vide *J.A.S.B.* I, 1832, p 378 says Śunya may be the illusory nature of all corporeal and mundane existence.

68 *Gita IV. 8.* In this space age, the acceptable definition of an Avatār can be : any one who awakens in himself the consciousness, which is all pervading eternal, can deserve the title of an 'Avatrā'.

69 *PTS*. pp 50-51.

Tușita heaven with gods. He, being Sumedha Buddha (of Pali and Burmese tradition), was forecast by Dipaṅkara Buddha to become Gautama Buddha.[70]

This Buddha's decision to take birth in the family of Śuddhodana and Māyā, at the blessings of Dipaṅkara, in Pali tradition, is attached so much importance in later literature, it seems that as if he would not have decended from heaven without this episode.

LV (II) even goes to the extent of recording that all the gods of heaven requested him to descend from heaven, for the salvation of suffering humanity. It assigns first five chapters to this episode and his birth, which takes place amidst great jubilation, on earth, as well as in heaven.]

In Mahavastu[71] (III p. 378) the word Avatār is used in connection with Buddha. Though J.J. Jones (Mhv. II p. 228 ftn.) means it 'chance to tempt'. The very use of the word for Buddha denotes that the writer had the conception of incarnation (Avatār) for him in mind.

Aśvaghoșa, in S. (II. 48),[72] has directly mentioned Bodhisattva's decent from Tușita, to become incarnate in the family of Śuddhodana.

The story of the enterance of the elephant into Māyā, which is referred to by Aśvaghoșa, and accepted as a fact in LV, "is only a figure of speech, to express the ncarnation of divine mildness" (R. Davids, DN II. 108 ftn. 1).

Though not historical, this story of Buddha's descent from Tușita heaven from amongst the gods, and take birth for the amelioration of suffering humanity, for the maintenance of Dharma, is the very idea of Avatār (incarnation), introduced by the Mahāyānist Buddhists.

**Buddha-Supernatural**

In Sutta-Nipāta, the life of Buddha is simple and emphasises the historicity of Buddha. Similarly in Ariyapariyesana Sutta (MN), in what laymen thought of Buddha, there is nothing divine about him. But in later literature i.e. in the whole of Pali Therāgāthā and Buddhist Sanskrit literature, he is described as possessed of omniscence supernatural powers, which are unattainable by others, though he is regarded as a human being.

The ideá of Buddha, the superman, can be traced in Sutta Nipāta 544,[73] Nikayas (DN III 157, AN IV 36) and Jatakas in Pali literature. And in Mahavastu

70 दीपंकरोऽपिभगवा . . . आगन्तवा तापस्य सौसभागे . . . उत्वा गोतमोनाम बुद्धो . . . ।
. . . महानादं पवत्तेसु ध्रुवं बुद्धो भविस्ससि ।
(*Nidānakatha. Pali ed.*, pp. 19 & 22).

71 *R.G. Basak Ed. (Skt).*
अवताराર्थी अवतारं गवेषी अलभंताच अवतारं ।

72 देवेभ्यस्तुषितेभ्योऽथ बोधिसत्त्वः क्षितिं व्रजन् ।

73 In the world of men and gods, there is no one equal to this (*Sn.* 544).

(I.179 Mahapuruşrûpam).[74] Lalitavistara,[75] Buddhacarita (I.29, X 3.6) and Saundernanda (I.52-56, XVIII. 73 ff) in Sanskrit literature. Bramaya Sutta (MN. II) gives details of other particulars about Gautama which are characteristics of all the Buddhas, and Mahapuruşa Sutta (SN) and Vasakara Sutta (AN) give the Buddhist as against the pre-Buddhist interpretation of greatman.

**Superman Laksanas (marks)**

A perfect type of personality, a divine being in human form (puruşottama), is needed for devotion. He is assigned thirty-two bodily characteristics. The possessor of these thirty-two (32) marks is said to become either a Buddha or a universal monarch (Sn. 1000-3).

Lakkhana Sutta (DN. III.) 142-79, p 137 ff and Selasutta (M. Vagga. SBE. X) give details of these thirty-two bodily characteristics[76] and eight minor characteristics of a superman being. Lakkhana Sutta 156, p 148, assigning the lakşnas of a superman being (puruşottama), records that in a former birth, Tathāgata, then being a human, was the foremost learner "in craft, trade or science in conduct or action"... "Deceasing thence and attaining the life,... he acquires the marks of a superman to wit : legs like an antelope's".

**Art and Mahapurusa Laksana**

The description of thirty-two Mahapuruşa Lakşana, on the body of Buddha, served as a source of sculpturing the Buddha's image, for the artists, "physiologically the kind of psychological mood or frame of mind which they were expected to portray as these Lakşanas which were of use to the sculptor, both in the standing and seated position. These Mahapuruşa Lakşanas can be enumerated thus : his proportions have the symmetry of the banyan tree, the compass of his arms is equal to his height, his arms are long so that when he stands his hands touch his knees, he has long fingers and his hands and feet are like a net (jālaṅguli-hasta-pāda), his skin is delicately smooth, the male organ is concealed in a sheeth (it is said that in Yogic trance it becomes contracted), he has curly hair and between the eye-brows a hairy mole, etc."[77]

Innumerable Buddha's images are decorating India's museums and Buddhist sites where Buddha is shown with these divine-body marks on hands or feet.

Yuan-Chwang[78] visited Patliputra (Kusumpura) and out of several hundred convents built there by Aśoka he saw the foundations of two or three of them. On

74 *Mhv.* (I. Ed. S. Bagachi 1970 p. 177, and महापुरुष लक्षणानि (p. 151); पुरुषोत्तम pp 147 and 171.

75 *L.V.* (P.L. Vadiya) p. 74. महापुरुषलक्षणैः स्मान्वागतः !

76 This idea is as old as Vedic hymns (Sn. 1000).

77 Rattan Parmioo, *L of B in Sculpture*, p 38.

78 *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, Tr. S. Beal, pp 101-2.

one of them he saw the remnants of a great square stone, standing on which Tathāgata (a) gazed upon Vajrāsana (the diamond seat) on which he reached perfect enlightenment and (b) Rajagṛha for the last time before leaving for Vaiśāli to attain Nirvāṇa. The stone bears the traces of the feet of Buddha, each of which is one feet eight inches in length and six inches in breadth. All the ten toes bear the figures, vases, fishes etc, and the feet bear the sign of 1000 spokes of a wheel. All these signs sparkled in light.

Chandigarh Museum displays a replica of a Buddha's foot[79] with Mahapuruṣa lakṣanas. It bears the signs of wheel, lotus, swastic shankha (counch) marks on the fingers of the toe.

## The Concept of Buddha Dev-Deva

Historically viewed, Buddha was merely a human being. The development of his personality and cult, if scrutinised from Pali canonical works to commentaries, depict a contrast. He is all enlightened without any equal even as an Arhat in the earlier Pali literature (M.N. III. 8). This quality is magnified later on in Jatakas and then in Sanskrit works e.g. Mahavastu, L.V. and Aśvaghoṣa's Kāvyas. In Kathavattau (III, 1) the qualities and powers of Buddha i.e. Daśabala (or ten power), also (some of them) are found in his disciples.

In still later literature, in the evolution of Buddhism from Hinayana to Mahāyāna, Buddha, starting from an ordinary human being, has been depicted as a supernatural being, with divine and miraculous powers. Whether he really had these dev-deva and miraculous powers in his real life, cannot be judged, in the absence of the contemporary records or Buddha's own written documents. However, the following is the account how he was taken by different schools of Buddhism after his Pari-Nirvāṇa, as depicted by his devotees.

### Buddhist conception or view of God

Niddesa[80] divides gods into three classes (1) gods by birth i.e. gods in the ordinary sense from four great kings to Brahma-gods and beyond ; (2) gods by convention i.e. kings, prince etc. and deva (god) is the regular form of royal address ; and (3) gods of purity i.e. disciples who are arhats and the paccaka-Buddhas. Buddha himself is a god, the super god (anti-deva), and the god beyond the gods (devatideva).[81] However, he is not assigned the powers of a creator or originator of the universe or its ultimate reality.

In this connection, it may not be out of place to mention that in the whole of Vedic literature, various gods have appeared with hymns sung in their praise and with

79 The original belongs to Peshawar (1. AD) and is in Gandhāra Art.

80 Niddesa is divided into Mahaniddesa a commentary in the Aṭṭhaka-Vagga of the Sutta-Nipāta and Cullavagga a commentary.
On Pārāyan-Vagga and Khaggavisāṇa-Sutta of the same works.

81 E.J. Thomas, *L of B*, p 214.

sacrifices. In Buddhist tradition (Pali and Sanskrit) these very gods lose their godly dignity, and are regarded as personalities of moral nature and inferior to Buddha e.g. *Indra*, who is primarily the god of thunder and also is the lord of other gods in the heaven is found, in Buddhist literature, to belong to the realm of four great kings and thirty three gods, is usually defined as god of gods (SN. I. 220-4). He has faith in Buddhas (Ibid. 231-2) and praise the Arhat and Sekkha (one who has still to learn). (Ibid. 235). He is depicted so humane that once in his fight with the Asuras he saw a bird's nest on a tree. For fear of destroying it with the pole of his Chariot he asked the charioteer Mātali to avoid it. He said he would rather loose in the fight than make the bird nestless. (Ibid. 224)

Indra is also called Sakka (Sakra) (an adjective qualifying gods). He is called Sahassakkha (thousand eyed) in SN (I. PTS. p 230). He was present at the death of Buddha and uttered a verse of lament (Mahāparinibbāna Sutta. DN II. 157).[82]

"They're transient all, each being's parts and powers,

Growth is their very nature, and decay.
They are produced, they are dissolved again,
To bring them all into subjection—that is bliss".

This is in accordance to Buddha's teaching, 'whatsoever hath an origin in that is inherent the necessity of dissolution' and clearly indicates his faith in Buddha.

*Śakra* (Indra) in Mahavastu (III. 200)[83] proclaims eight wonderful and marvellous truths about the exalted one (Buddha). He says that "when perfect Buddha has arisen in the world, the hosts of Asuras wane, the host of devas vax. For the beautifully proclaimed dharma and discipline of Tathāgata, Arhan and perfect Buddha, bears on this present life and is independent of time. It welcomes and guides . . . ".

*Brahma Shampati* (the ruler of Brahma world) may be identified with Brahma Swayambhu of the Brahmaṇical literature.[84] According to Buddhist tradition when there was conflict in Buddha's mind to preach or not to preach the profound and difficult philosophy to ignorant masses, it was at his request that Buddha agreed to set the Dharma-Ckaraparivartna, that also out of compassion for the suffering humanity.[85] At a previous occasion, when Buddha attained enlightement, Brahma Shampati held

82 *Dialogue II*, p. 175-6.
*Mhv* (J.J. Jones III p 195 fln. 2 *Śakra in Indra*, lord of Devas.
83 *J.J. Jones*. p. 196.
84 Cf. R. Davids and Oldenberg, *Vinaya Text* (Mahavagga. I. 5) ftn. I p. 86.
The title Shampati given in Vinaya and MN is a later gloss. According to Commentary he is the chief great Brahma in this universe *Dialogue* (DN II) ftn. 4 p 03).
85 For details Cf. *Ch. I of this work*.

a white parasol, three yojnas in diameter over his head.[86] Mahagovind Sutra also gives importance to Brahma, above other gods, but maintains him inferior to Buddha.

In Mahāsamaya Sutta (DN. II 253-62) and Atantiya Suttanta (DN. III 194-206) a host of gods come to pay respect to him and to 500 Arhats with whom he was staying in the outskirts of Kapilvastu. They included Yakkhas, Vasamitta's host, Kumbhira, Dhātaratha the lord of Gandhabbas, Virulha, the ruler of southern clime, Virūpakkha the ruler of western clime, Kubera the ruler of northern clime, Asuras, Namuci, Bali and his hundred sons, Rāhu, the gods of fire and water, earth and air, celestial Varuṇas, Viṣnu and Yama twins, god Sakka, Vāsavaneśi deities etc. In these suttas not only they are shown inferior to Buddha but to Arhats also. These gods are honoured in their respective words, but Buddha rules over the whole universe. But were these gods of Vedic age, lowered from their exalted and immortal position in Buddhism only ? The answer is a clear 'No', as will be clear from the following :

It seems during the Upaniṣadic period, when the theory of Karman and transmigration developed, the scales changed. In Śatpatha Brahmaṇa (H, Granthamala Ed. II 825, they have been equated with men. It is stated that according to Karman, the the soul may have a human or divine form. In Chandogya Upaniṣad 4.15.5-6, some of the gods are told as functionaries towards the Law of the Karman. In Śvet. Upaniṣad 6.11 one of the gods is called Karmadhyakṣa.

In the later Buddhist literature, with the passage of the time, devotion to Buddha increased, and as such every episode or event connected with his life, was linked with divine force. For example, in J.A. (I. 50) Māyā devi's (mother of Buddha) was pure and sacred, like the interior of a caitya.

In Mahavastu (II. 15), when Bodhisattva enters his mother's womb all the superhuman beings (devas) attend upon her and sanctify her : ". . . . all theSupraṇa kings and lords, the caturamahārājika devas, the Trāyastriṃśa devas, the Yama devas, the Tuṣita devas, the Nirmāṇarati devas, the Paranirmitavasavartin devas, and the Brahma devas enter her abode and sprinkle her with celestial powder of sandal wood and the aloe wood. They sprinkle her with celestial powder of tamāla' leaves, with celestial showers of blossoms and laud her with perfect consummate and absolutely pure praise. Then saluting her thrice from the right, they go their way". Again (Ibid. 16) hosts of devas by night and day come to enquire about Bodhisattva's health. When Māyādevi slept in pregnancy, Deva maidens fanned her with garlands of coral tree

86 *Bud. Comy.* p 287. This incident was sculptured in the relic chamber of Mahāthupa (M.V. XXX 74), Cf. Jat. Vol. IV p. 266 (quoted by J.R. Haldar, Early Buddhist Mythology ftn. 376 p. 98).

The word 'Brahma',in Vedas, transforms its meanings from prayer, sacred knowledge and then to first cause of universe. It is neuter-noun when it means prayer or sacred knowledge and is masculine noun when it means creater. Buddha adopted it in its last stage and gave it a new idea in his cosmology and mythology. (S. Tachibans Ethics p. 34 ff. cf. Dr Lokesh Chandra, the origin of Avdokita-Svara p. 43 vide Bodhi Raśmi, brochure first. International Conference. Delhi, Oct. 1984).

(Ibid, 17). In this work (Mhv. II.15 ff) he is depicted Dev-deva right from the conception and is named as Lōkōttaravādin.[87]

In Chattarvastu Avadāna (Mhv. I 266, p 220, ff), Buddha is assigned the power of creation (Nirmitas) also. In this Avadāna, he is adorned by the guardians of the world and Suyama the lord of Yamadevas visit him as to an overlord (Mhv. I. 264, 265 ff. p 218 ff).

Ten thousand devas go to worship him with fragrant garlands in their hands.[88] Buddha says (Mhv. I. 326) let it be known that he is the enlightened one and refuge of all beings.[89]

In L.V. (p. 90 ff)[90] there is a gāthā that while Siddhārtha went to see fields with his friends, five ṛṣis passed flying above him. They assigned a place to him higher and also equivalent to that of many Hindu gods.

Coming to the time of Aśvaghoṣa, Buddha's position had been further exalted with him, right from his birth, was not only connected with divine element, but the devas always serve him. When he was born and lying in his couch, Yakṣa lords guarded him and were his attendents (J.B.I. 17). Mighty snakes who were eager for the excellent law fanned him with eyes shining with devotion. (B.I. 19). And the birth was celebrated by Suddhavāsa and Tuṣita deities (S. II. 55, B.I. 20). "The dwellers in heaven muttered the highest blessings that he might attain enlightenment (B.I. 18), bowing their head in obeisance." "The troops of heavenly beings petitioners for the Law thronged the grove" (B.I. 24)."

When Siddhārtha went to pleasure trip, Suddhādhivāsa gods seeing the city as joyful as paradise, created the illusion of an old man to incite him to leave his home (B. III. 26.). The same gods created a sickman (Ibid. 40) and a lifeless man (Ibid. 54).

When Siddhārtha renounced the wordly life and left Kapilvastu, (B.V. 70, 82), his horse (Kanthaka) did not make any noise as Yakṣas bowing down their bodies, bore up the hoofs with the tips of their hands (Ibid. 81). It was the divine ordering :

87 Some of the scholars think that Lokottaravādin is a school of Mahāsaṁghikas. *Cotophones of Mhv.* (Calcutta Ed. 1968, p. 619). But H.P. Shastri (Adv. V. Sang. Intro p. XVIII) says that Mahāsaṁghikas had hardly any such named school. According to this school, Buddha had to exert in innumerable 'kalpas' as compared with the conviction of primitive Buddhists, who believed that Buddha had to exert only for one 'kalpa'.
(*L.V.*) (Vaidya) p 91, 3.

88 तत्र देवपुत्रशतसहस्राणि सह गच्छान्ति गन्धमाल्य हस्ता बोधिसत्त्वस्य पूजार्थं ।
(*Mhv. I.* Bagchi p. 172).

89 शरणं सर्वभूतानां अहं इतिविदु: (*Ibid.* p. 146).

90 रूपं वैश्रवणातिरेक वपुषं व्यक्तं कुबेह्यं
आहो वज्रधरस्य चैव प्रतिमा चन्द्रोऽथ सूर्यो ह्यम् ।
कामाग्राधिपतिक्ष्य वा प्रतिकृती रुद्रस्य कृष्णास्य वा
श्रीमान् लक्षणचित्तिताङ्गमनघी बुद्धऽथ बा स्यादयम् ।। ३ ।। L.V. Vaidya p. 91,3.

(a) That thousands of kings observants remained sleeping and the Bodhisattva, left the city (B. VIII. 47). At this renunciation the troops of court of the the lord of wealth rejoiced (B.V. 85).

(b) That suitable garments for forest wear were handed over to him by a denizen of heaven (Ibid. 48) ;

(c) and he went forth with gods in attendence. (Ibid. 49).

When he became extremely weak and realised the futility of extreme austerities (B. XIII. 103 ff), after bathing in Nairanjana, came up the river with the help of branches (Ibid. 108) ; it was with divine instigation that Nandabala went to him (Ibid. 109) and offered him milk-rice (Ibid. 111) which he accepted and ate.

When Māra with his army was failing in his efforts to shake the faith of the sage (B. XIII. 55), certain invisible form from the sky (Ibid. 56) made him realise that the sage can never be shaken (Ibid. 57 ff).

When Buddha attained enlightenment, "the earth swayed like a women drunken with wine. The quarters shown bright with crowds of Siddhas and the mightly drums resounded in the sky" (B. XIV. 87). "The companies of deities who are devoted to salvation rejoiced" (B. XIV 91).[91]

When Siddhārtha became Buddha, the gods of four quarters presented him with begging bowls. (B. XIV. 104).[92]

Thus Aśvaghoṣa has idealised Buddha. But *Aśvaghoṣa is not* the only poet to do so. In Mahavagga I. 6.8 Śākyamuṇi says "I have overcome all foes, I am all wise, I am free from stains in every way, I have left everything and have obtained emancipation by the destruction of desire. Having myself gained knowledge, whom should I call my master ? I have no teacher, no one is equal to me. I am the holy one in this world, I am the highest teacher, I alone am the absolute Saṁbuddha...".

In MN, (PTS. 1976.1.182) Buddha says, he who has faith (Śraddha) in me will attain heaven (because Dhamma has been well taught by me).

Sāddharma Pundrika (SBE XXI p. 369) exalts Buddha and narrates, "while roaming the world he rouses many Bodhisattvas.". . . . "The future and past Buddhas in the ten points of space will all be seen and worshipped by him who keep this

91 Buddha of Aśvaghośa occupies the highest central position, as occupied by a deity in other faith. This is the slic phase of Buddhism (Waddell, *Lamaism* p. 325).

92 ददुः पात्राणि भिक्षार्थमेत्य तस्मै दिशां सुराः ।
आदाय तानि सर्वाणि तन चैकीकृतं मुदा ॥
(B XIV 148 (H)

The story of begging bowls presented by the gods of four quarters is repeated from M. Vagga (I. 4) to Aśvaghoṣa's time. The miraculous element, that with the touch of Buddha, they not only turned into one but there appeared for koties (millions) replicas of the begging bowls is a later addition taken that the four kotis is a metaphorical expression and represents the innumerable number of Buddhist Bhikṣus.

Sutra. . . . The wise Bodhisattvas, who after hearing the enumeration of such advantages, shall keep the Sutra after my complete extinction will doubtless reach enlightenment" (V. 14 p. 369).

The nucleus of this work (Sāddharma Pundrika), according to Winternitz (HIL. II p 304) belongs to first century AD. If this date is taken as correct, then Aśvaghoṣa's idealisation of the teacher is in agreement with the changing way of thinking of the era in which our poet wrote. The handsome Buddha with signs of superman, with supernatural qualities, has been exalted by Aśvaghoṣa, from the level of an ordinary human Buddha to Dev-deva. In this he has used the choicest vocabulary and epethets, to infuse Śraddha (faith) in him, as the liberator of mankind . . . and Buddhism the only road to salvation.

This consistent and ever-increasing deification of Buddha, naturally influenced the sculptures and painters of the time.

Mathura Museum (11.161) displays Buddha, god of gods, in sculpture. Brahma and Viṣnu are depicted on his right and left sides. They are requesting him to preach the law. Carved halo round their head shows their superior position.[93]

The great stupa of Kaniṣka found in the Shahji-ki-Dheri depicts Brahma and Indra, in Añjali Mudra, flanking the Buddha.[94]

In Bhārhut Arts Surya, Laksmi, Indra and Agni find a place along with "Symbolic representations of Buddha and other stories connected with his past life. The art is spontaneous and owe no subservience to any official school of art.'' (Satish Chandra, Bhārhut Vedika, p 11).

**Pratihariya (Miraculous Powers of Buddha)**

The acquisition of Pratihāriya has been regarded as a must for every Buddha (past or present), before death (Divya pp. 150-1). According to Tibetan Sources (Rockhill, Buddha p. 79 ff) our Buddha acquired these powers in his *16th* year when he defeated the six principal philosophical masters who claimed to be great magicians. Their names are recorded in Dulva (IV. f 141. 409 ff).

Dharma Saṁgrah (vide B.S.I 17 p. 339) speaks of three kinds of Pratihāriya i.e. Riddhi-Pratihāriya, Adeshna-Pratihāriya and Anushāsni-pratihāriya.[95]

93 R.C. Sharma, *Handbook Mathura Museum*, p 44.

94 J.E. Van *Lohuizen-de Leeuw, vide S. Asian Archaeology*, 1979, Berlin, quoted by Dr Lokesh Chandra, *Bodhi Raśhmi*. p. 42.

95 These powers are used by Buddha for converting or preaching people. (Cf. J.R. Haldar, *Early Buddhist Mythology* p. 180, ftns. 12 and 14).
Riddhi-pratihāriya (exhibition of miraculous powers)
Adeshnapratihāriya (reading their thoughts)
Anushasnipratihāriya (teaching them according to their temprament and character) (*J.R. Haldar* p. 130).

Bodhisattvabhumi discusses[96] two kinds of Riddhi-pratihāriya : (1) Parināmiki (i.e. the nature of transformation) and (2) Nairmāṇiki (the nature of creation).

Divyāvadana (XII) highlights the Mahā-pratihāriya of Śravasti called Yamak-pratihāriya :

(1) He walks in the air in various attitudes emitting flames and waves from the upper and lower parts of his body, alternatively.

(2) With his magical powers, he transforms himself into many images upto heaven and in all directions and preaches his law.

The above Yamaka-Pratihāriya is repeated in (a) Mahavaṁśa (H) 17.44, 30. 77-78, 31. 91-99 where a like miracle is performed by the relics of Buddha, which assume the form of Buddha, and :

(b) In the Burmese tradition (Gaudama. Bigandet. I pp 205-207) ; and :

(c) In Mahavastu III. 115-116 (Jones pp 115-6).

The most popular traditional pratihāriya (miraculous power) assigned to Buddha in Pali and Sanskrit literature is the miracle of Śravasti (Perhaps because in order to influence the heretic teachers Buddha perfomed it for the first time at Śrāvasti, in the presence of a group of spectators including king Presenjit of Śravasti).[97]

Nidānakatha[98] refers to Yamaka-pratihāriya, where Buddha rises in the sky to win the applause and adorations of elder scattering dust of Śākya (with his feet over their heads) who were unwilling to salute him thinking that he was their kinsman and younger to them. Here also he displayed his miraculous power of emitting flames and water from his upper and lower parts of the body.

In Pali sources[99] Buddha's Mahā-pratihāriya of Śravasti is designated as the miracle of the foot of the mango-tree. Jataka 483 (Tr. R. Davids) narrates that Buddha rose from his seat, placed his right foot on the top of Yogandhara and with his left strode to the peak of Sineru, "he began the season of rains under the great coral tree, seated upon the yellow-stone throne, for the space of three months he discoursed upon transcendental doctrine to the gods." (Ibid p. 168).

Besides this Buddha is assigned countless other miraculous powers, in Buddhist literature of the times (100 BC to 300 AD). Mahavagga (I.6 SBE XIII. p 90) assigns

96 For details please Cf. Har Dayal's "*The Bodhisattva doctrine*" pp 113 ff.

97 *Ajanta Cave* I depicts this scene in Painting. In this miracle he multiplies himself into innumerable Buddhas in different Mudras on lotuses, p 3 and pl. Ajanta Cave I (ref. J.H. Jadavpur U. 1982, vide S.K. Maity's article *My pilgrimage to Ajanta*).

98 न मं जातयो वन्दन्ति, हन्द दानि ने वन्दापेस्सामिति अभिञ्ञापादकन्झानं
समापीज्जत्वा बुट्टायं आकासं अब्भुग्गन्तवा तेसं सीसे पादपांसु ओकिरमानो
विय गण्डम्बरुक्खमूले यमकपरिहारिय सदिसं परिहारियं अकासि ।
(*N. Katha*. Prof. Tiwari. p 218)

99 *J. 482* (*Tr*. R. Davids pp. 166 ff and fins.).

divine power of vision to Buddha. Here with clear vision surpassing that of men he saw, that five bhikṣus were living at Benaras in the deer park Isipatana.[100]

His (Buddha's) body is radiating light, right from the day of conception itself. From the day his mother conceived him, a very bright light appeared illuminating the Deva, Brahma and the human world. This light was so bright that the beings of one world could see the beings of another world (Vis. p 392 ; Mil. SBE XXXVI p 220).

Jataka (I p. 92) tells that sometimes the teacher sent a ray of light from his apartment in Jatavana monastry to encourage meditating monks. He himself appeared in this ray of light and preached.[101] The radiance which emanates from his smile, is considered competent to shed lustre upon all Buddha fields (Mhv. I. Bagchi 1970 Intro. p. 8).

As per another reference, the colour of Buddha's skin becomes clear and exceedingly bright on the night when he attains enlightenment and on the night when he passes away. (DN. II. 134, Dialogue p. 146). In L.V. he sends a challenge to Māra, in the form of a light from his urṇa, which reaches him (Māra) in his celestial palace.

After enlightenment, the teacher went to Vārānasi on foot. In this journey he wanted to cross river Ganga, but being unable to pay the fare to boatman, crossed it through air (Mhv. III. 328. 6 ; LV. 528 (407) p 297); LV tells us that as a consequence of this, King Bimbasara of Magadha abolished the toll for ascetics.[102]

Buddha himself tells in Mahavastu (IV 122. p 120) that he could travel wherever he liked. He (Mhv. II pp 92-3) is said to have risen up in the air without touching the ground. In similar expression in Jataka 40 (R. Davids. p 105) Buddha is narrated to have bodily risen into the air.

He performs many other unprecedented miracles e.g. Mahāprajapati had become blind due to excessive weeping and grief for the prince. When Buddha visited Kapilvastu, her eyesight was restored by bathing them in the water that flowed from the body of Buddha, while he was in the air (and was performing Yamak-pratihāriya) (Mhv. III. 116, p. 116).[103]

The miracle of creating as many Buddhas as there were sunshades, is assigned to Buddha in Chattarvastu Avadāna (Mhv. I. 266, p 221 ff).[104] The holders of sunshades could not see one another's Buddha. For this he was paid homage by the devas,

100 The Mṛgadawa or deer park is represented by a fine wood which still covers an area of half a mile and extends from the great power of Dhamek on the north to Chaukundi mound on the South." *Cunningham A.R.I.* p 107 (SBE XIII fln. 3, p 90).

101 *Sut. Comy Vol I.* pp 16, 265 quoted by J.R. Haldar. *EBM* p. 130 and ftn. 14.

102 . . . श्रमणः स्वामि गौतमस्तरपण्यं याचमानो नस्ति तरपव्यमित्युक्त्वा
विहायसा अतस्तीरात्परं वीरं गत इति इति । तच्छ्रुत्वा तदग्रेण राज्ञा
विम्बसरिण सर्वप्रव्रजितानां तरपव्यमुत्सृष्टभवत् । (*LV.* p. 297)

103 In Mahākarma Vibhanga (vide BST. 7 p. 210), Śuddhodana loses his eyesight due to weeping.

## Asvaghosa and Powers of Buddha

The identical expression is found in Aśvaghoṣa's Saunderananda (S.III. 22)[105] where Buddha is described to have divided into many forms and then become one again. After his enlightenment, Buddha assumes various forms to enlighten people.[106] Aśvaghoṣa has assigned many other divine and fathomless powers to Buddha, right from the day he was born (B.I. 29).[107] "He walked in the air; on water as if on dry land ; penetrated earth as if it were water, he shed rain like a cloud in the sky and then he blazed like the newly risen sun (S.III. 23). Simultaneously blazing like a fire and shedding water like a cloud and shining with the brilliance of refined gold, he resembled a cloud glorious with the hues of sunset." (Ibid, 24)

A Foucher (B Art, pp 151 ff) discusses the Yamak-pratihāriya and concludes that the power of holding a dialogue with a magic double, is a privilege of perfect Buddhas only and is denied to simple Śrāvakas (Divya p. 162 ; 166, I.2).

## Miraculous Powers of Buddha in Art and Sculpture

The artists of the times preferred the multiplication of the teaching images of the master (see A Foucher, B. Art plates XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVII. Plate XXI. 2 in China the Ta-T'ong-Fou-Caves depict Buddha with rising flames from his head and gushing water from his lower body.)

Ajanta Cave I depicts a similar scene in painting. Here also Buddha is shown meditating and preaching. The lotuses serve his standing (preaching) and sitting (meditating) seats. (Ajanta I, Griffith, pl. 15.)

Late 9th century Nalanda sculpture depicts a lotus plant, from the stalk of which shoot out many large and small lotuses. These lotuses serve as seats for many seated and standing Buddhas. (fig. 69 in R. Parimoo's L of B in Sculpture.)

The older Buddhist sculptural tradition knew of a miracle of Śrāvasti, but it resembles the modest version found in the Pali Jataka tales or the slightly more elaborate one in the Dhammapada commentary.[108] In these the chief miracles were

104 Chattarvastu Avadāna (Mhv. I. 218 and 253 ff) glorifies the miraculous powers of Buddha. The gods and spirits hold sunshades over the teacher, after he has delivered the city of Śrāvasti from a dreadful plague caused by Yakṣas. Buddha, with his usual kindness, uses the magic powers, to cause a Buddha to appear under each sun-shade, so that each god thinks Buddha is sitting under his sun-shade.

105 पुनर्बहुधागबंत्पुनरभूत्तथैकधा
This is the idea of Krishna's Rāslila.

106 The idea of multi Thatagatas and multi Bodhisattvas is found in Sadharma Pundarika (SBE XXI. Chap. XX, T. Rahula. Mhv. Study, p. 77).

107 अमानुषीं तस्यनिशाम्य शक्ति (B.I. 29).

108 Coomarswamy, *Bhārhut pl.* XI p 53 J. 483. Dhm. Camy. Burlingame pt. III pp 35-56. M. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Art of the Kusanas*, p 237 and ft. ns.

the Buddha's ability to cause a large mango tree to grow instantly from a seed, to levitate himself, and to create the illusion of his double in the air. On rare occasions Gandhāran sculptors carved the simpler of the Divyâvadana miracles, in which the Buddha emitted fire and water from his shoulders and feet. These carvings are a part of the usual biographical relief cycles."[109]

**Buddha Bhakti and Epithets**

The whole of Buddhist literature is full of choicest epithets to highlight Buddha's qualities of head and heart, his personality, qualifications, powers and other virtuous qualities.[110]

He is god of gods but is not assigned the power of creation as Brahma or power of destruction like Yama. The Mahasaṁghika sect of Hinayāna discusses the eternity and omnipotence of Buddha (Waddell, Lamaism, p 123) Lókóttaravāda school depicts Buddha as incomparable one without equal (T. Rahula, Mhv. Study. p 70).

In Pali as well as Sanskrit literature, Buddha is addressed under various epithets, appellations and names.

He, in Sutta Nipāta which lavishes all praise for ascetic life, is styled as Iśi (1060, 1082) Muṇi (164, 571, 700, 1057), Śaka (345) Brahmaṇa (1064) and Bhikkhu (411, 415). All these appellations are used synonymously in 283, 284, 1064, 1066, 843, 844, 911, 912, 946, 220 verses. His feet are worshipped by the Nagas (Sn. 573) ; he is the born eye (of wisdom) diṭṭhadhammābhinibbuta.

V. Fausboll, in the introduction to Sutta Nipāta (pp XIV-XVI),[111] has collected all the adjectives used in the Sutta for Buddha to magnify his qualities.

In AN he is called Sāmaṇa, Brahmaṇa, Védagu, Bhiṣaka, Nimala, Vimala, Muṇi and Vimutta. Buddhaghoṣa adds seven others : Cakkuma, Sabbabhūta-nukampi, Vihātaka, Mārasenappamaddi, Vusitava, Vimutto and Angirassa (DA. III. 962 f). He is also known as Mahamuṇi (Buddhavaṁśa A. 38) and Yakkha (MNI. 386 (Kindard Saying I. 262). The famous formulae used by Buddhists in their ritual contains nine epithets. "Bhāgva Arhan Samma Sambuddho Vijjācaraṇa Sampamso, Sugato, lòkavidu, anuttaro, purisadamma-Sārathi, Sattha devamanussānam, Buddho Bhāgava." (Vism. 198 ff). Buddha's praises are narrated limitless (aparimāṇa) (e.g. DA. I. 288).[112]

109 From *Sangho* (Foucher *A.G.B.* fig. 263 Sahri-Bahlol Taxila (Ingholt No. 109). Foucher maintains that the Presenjit Pillar of Bhārhut belongs to the miracle imagery, but as it shows only the king coming in his Chariot in homage it can hardly be considered part of the iconic tradition. *Beginning of B Art* p. 178, Coomarswamy, *Bhārhut fig. 75* (Ibid).

110 In Mahāyāna, the most important of all the practices is to medidate with admiration and faith or confidence in the spiritual teacher (Sutras and Tantras, p 89).

111 *SBE* X.

112 *DPPN.* pp 304-5.
He is called Muṇi in Buddhist-literature for he had forsaken the world and meditated in the forest (Sn. 164).

Kern (Manual, p 63) mentions special names for Gautama Buddha in addition to various epithets applied to Buddhas in general e.g. "Śakyasiṁha, Śakyamuṇi, Śakya pungava, Śakya, Sauddodani, Adityabandhu[113] (in contradistinction to Krisnabandhu i.e. Māra) Suryavanśi Siddhārtha, Sarvārthasiddha, Angiros and Gautama."

*Mahavastu* (I. 229 p. 185)[114] has used the following expressions recalling the virtues and qualities of Buddha : Puruṣanaga (the elephant or the valient or courageous man),[115] Puruṣasiṁha (the lion man)[116] (Cf. Sn, SBE 165) Puruṣaṛṣbha (the bull man Puruṣa Kumadana and Puruṣapundarika (the red and white lotus man), Puruṣad-haryana) (man of the Yoke), Satpuruṣa[117] (the true man), Puruṣajaneya (noble stead of man), anuttari puruṣa damyasarthi[118] (the pearless driver of tameable men), Sugata (here denoted by Synonymous gatima). Smṛtiman, matiman, dhṛtiman (never forgetful, intelligent and wise man), anuttaran Sambodhisambuddha (awaken to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment) "by insight gained in a momentary flash of thought." Then he is called Svayambhu (Mhv. I. 3, p 3) i.e. self-born, Lokapradyota (light of the world)[119], Lokasya cetiya (monument of the world) and Tathāgata. The destroyer of the son of darkness (Krishna bandhu i.e. Māra) ; Conquerer of Māra (Mṛturājapraṇudam) (T. Rahula Mhv. Study. p 180) "with the power of magic (pratihāriya) thou didst illumine the ten quarters of great seer, honoured a hundred times by men and gods). The hundreds of thousands of merits accrue by calling the name of Sugata once.

You are khiladosamosham i.e. cure barrenness of malic and folly. Daśabala and endowed with the mahāpuruṣalakṣane etc. You are wise, unequalled, hero, a saviour, untarnished, a most eminent conquerer, a self dependent one (Mhv. II p 276) omniscient ; (Ibid p. 316 and like Indra's banner etc.).

**Asvaghosa and Buddha**

Buddha in the words of Aśvaghoṣa is Karuṇavedina,[120] as it is always com-

113 He is Adityabandhu as Śakyas formed a gens of the great tribe of Sun-decendent (Sn. (*HOS*) pp 98-101) Adicca Namagottena, Śakkiya-nama Jatiya.

114 Cf. *Bagchi. p 180* (2) Cf. *Mhv.II.* p 159 Naga.

115 Cf. *Mhv. II* p 159. The Lion man.

116 Cf. *Mhv. II.* p 159. Elect of Beings.

117 Cf. *Mhv. II.* p 159. The Leader of Carvan.

118 "At the eighth stage the Bodhisattva, Mahasattvas, Śravakas and Pratyeka-buddhas cease cherishing discriminating ideas that arise from the Citta, Manas and Manovi. From the first stage upto 6th, they perceive that the triple world is no more than the citta, Manas and jñana. Manovijñana. that as it is born of discriminating mind there is no ego soul and that belongs to it, and there is no falling into the multitudineousness of external objects except through (the discrimination of) the mind itself". (*Suzuki, Lankavatārsutta* p. 183).

119 *Mhv. II* 294 pp 274 ff.

120 *B.V.I.* 41कृरुणवेदिनः

passionate and ever feels pity. He is the best speaker,[121] long armed,[122] long eyed,[123] bright as the golden mountain,[124] is the best of men[125] and bull among them.[126]

He is free from ego,[127] anger[128] passion[129], and is the best listener."[130] He is chief among the wise[131] and is the lamp of Ikṣvaku race.[132]

He is Muṇi,[133] Mahamuṇi (S. VI. 1) and Buddhamuṇi (S. VI. 17) because he has forsaken the world and wandered from the house to houseless state[134] and meditated in the forest.[135] He is Sugata,[136] because he has gone to a happy state. He is Guru Buddha[137] and Guru[138] as he is a teacher and has opened the eyes of the disciples blinded by darkness and ignorance, with soothing balm of knowledge and by pointing the way to salvation.[139] He is Tathāgata[140] as he has decended to earth for the same purpose and has passed through the same training in all the supposed former Births of Buddhas.[141]

121 *B.V.* 42 वदतां वरं ॥

122 *B. VI.* 31 महाबाहो ।

123 *B. V.* 24 इहायताक्ष । , IV 69. विशालाक्ष ।

124 *B.V.* 42 कञ्जनपर्वता वदातो

25 *B. VII.* 37 मनुष्यवर्य । , V, 79 नृवरो ।

26 *B. V.* 17 नरपुङ्गव । . XII. 11 नरर्षभ: ।

In Nalika Sutta (SBE. X.) 12. He is the bull of the Śakyas. RV. II 33.4 uses Ṛshabh for Indra as the showerer of desires ऋषभ कामाना वार्षत: (Sayana. R.V. Vedic Saṅsthana Mandela, Mahārāstra Ed.).

127 *B. XII.* 26 मनहङ्कार ।

128 *B. XII.* 36 अक्रोध; अविषाद ।

129 *B. XII.* 31 विषयेष्वनभिष्वङ्ग: ।

130 *B. XII.* 16 शृण्वतां वर ।

131 *B. VII.* 44 मनीषिमुख्य: ।

132 *B. VII.* 6 इक्ष्वाकुलप्रदीपं ।

133 *S. IV.* 6 or 11 (H), 30; V 13, 14, 15, X 18, Sn. 164, 700.

134 *Sn.* (*SBE.* X) 273, 375, 1003.

135 *Ibid.* pp. XV and 164.

136 *S. III.* 21, IV. 5, 10, 28, 30; V. 13, 31, X 3, XIV 98, XVII 63.

137 *S. VII.* 16. In B XVI. 63 (Cowell's ed.) he is called the Buddha because "he makes wise all the ignorant". (SBE XLIX. p 181). Cowell interprets that here Buddha is identifying himself with his law. (ftn. of the verse). In Bhagvat Gita XI, 14, 44 and S. XVIII 22, 39-41, 53, XI 33 define Guru who points out the way to salvation.

138 *S.III.* 27, IV 30, 32, 37, XII 12, XVIII 5

B. is a teacher in Parmatthajotika I pp 21 ff, AN. 1. 142, II 33, III 65 Dhm. A.I. 233.

139 *S. X.I* 33, XVIII: 1, 22, 39-41, 53.

140 *S.III 20*, IV 4, 24, V 33. XVII 70 XVIII 30. He is Tathāgata because whatever he says it proves to be true and never fails. (SSS. p 11). The name Tathāgata seems to have been introduced by Sautrantika school (Wass. B. p 314, quoted by Waddell Lamaism. ftn. 2 p. 122).

141 *SBE* (*XI*). D.C.P. Sutta, ftn I, p 147.

He is Maharṣi,[142] Buddha,[143] Arhat,[144] Gautama,[145] Mahābhiṣak[146] and Bhiṣak Pradhān.[147]

Aśvaghoṣa's Siddhārtha, when born, was possessed of superhuman powers (B.I. 29), when grown up he was god among men and was like a god. (B.VIII 43). His glorious form surpassed that of mankind. (B.X. 3).[148] He was personification of Dharma or Dharma incarnate and none indulged in improper thoughts in his presence. (B.X. 6. Dharmasya Sākśādiv). He had the lustre of Sun and is compared with shining sun by the poet. (S. III. 16).[149]

At the birth of such a superman, who was to put an end to rebirth, the earth quivered S.II. 52). The Tuṣita and Śuddhavāsa deities rejo ced for the holy law (S.II. 85). There was shower of flowers and music in the heaven along with scented breeze (S. II. 53, 54). Similar scene is witnessed when he attained enlightenment. (B. XIV. 87, 88, 89, 91, 93).

Buddha is nishakrabha (B VII 24) or night making orb ; Indra kalpam (B VII 3) ; Śakropam (B VI 62) ; devakalpam (B X 7), nardeva sunam (Ibid) ; dhyānakóvid (master of the trance) (B XIV 1), gainer of the supreme divine eyesight (B XIV 7),[150] tattavajña (the knower of the cause, B XIV 68) ; dhīman (wise, B XII 39) ; mokṣakam (the desire of salvation, B XII 40) and Bodhisattva (B IX 30). He is daśabala (SXVII 73) i.e. possessed of ten powers (vacitās) including ṛddhiwonders.[151]

The above adjectives are used for Siddhārtha in different contexts directly and the epithet 'Svayambhu' (B II 51) is used in a veiled manner.

The physigonamy seems to be well developed in the times of Aśvaghoṣa. He has described Siddhārta possessing an extraordinary body which was incomparable with any human being. He excelled others in beauty, majesty and youth (B VIII 57). The poet says "In stature like the peak of the golden mountain, in arms, voice and eye resembling an elephant, a thunder cloud and bull respectively in countenance and step like the moon and a lion respectively". (B V 26, VI 13)

142 *S.IV 30.*
143 *S.IV 27*, 30.
144 *S.IV 29.*
145 *S.X. 58.*
146 *S.X 55*, B XIII, 61
147 *S. XVII 73.* In LV. (P.L. Vaidya) he is Bhiṣagvar, p 67 (106) ; 109 (150). Ref. Medical education for details in my '*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times.*
141 *B.X.* 3. वपुश्चद्रीप्तं पुरूषानत्तीत्य ।
149 *S.VII.* सूर्यं इव गौतमस्तम् ।
*B. VII* 6. ज्वलन्त मुद्यन्तमिवाँशुमन्तम् ।
150 सर्वचक्षुष्मतां वरः ।
151 The idea or the description of ṛddhi is borrowed from Pali canon. DN. I. 78. 1. ff). Infra *Daśabala* in this Ch.

The hermits of Bhardvaj's Āśrama, recognising from his features (B VII 56) forecast and say "It is clear from your brilliance, unfathomable depth and from your bodily signs, that you will obtain on earth a position, as a teacher, such as has not been won, even by the seers of golden age". (B. VII. 57)

Thus, we find that Aśvaghoṣa, who for the first time is said to have given a glimpse of Tri-kāyā conception of Buddha has used appalletions, epithets or adjectives indicating the same in his works. He has endowed him with Mahapurusa Lakṣana (physical signs) of greatness as in Pali literature; with celestial transfiguration, has given him a body of bliss and by assigning humane qualities has shown him a historical human Buddha and has idealised him.

Our poet has divided the religious aspirants into two classes :

(1) Those who obtain salvation of themselves by virtue of the Hetu working within them and

(2) Those who depend upon others. Buddha is the instance of former category and Nanda of the later.

Critically viewed the most frequent epithets used for the teacher in Pali as well as Sanskrit and other sources are Arhat,[152] Buddha, Samma Sambuddha, Gautama, Bodhisattva, Tathāgata, Bhagvat, Muṇi or Mahamuṇi Bhiṣaka or Maha-Bhiṣaka,[153] Daśabala, Sakka, Sugata, Divyachakṣusa etc. We shall discuss, briefly, the most important ones.

(1) *Arhat* has been used the most. An Arhat is a brother "who by destruction of the deadly taints, enters into and abides in that untainted emancipation of mind and of insight, which by himself he has both known and realised." (Dialogue III. 77. Camy).

In short Arhat is one who possessed of divine eyesight. Dogmatically Arhat is one who is walking in the 4th or highest stage of the path leading to Nirvāṇa (Kern, Manual 60).

(2) **Bhagva or Bhagvata[154] or Bhagvana[155]**

Buddha is better designated as Bhāgva Śakyamuṇi. It assigns him a place which is never to be gained by ordinary mortal. Lakkhans Sutta and Jataka stories of Mahavastu are the illustrations. According to the Jataka conception, other Bhāgvas, who preceded him, were governed by the law of Karuṇa, but Śākyamuṇi Bhāgva, as he was always devoted to the welfare of all beings, he was not necessarily

152 *S.S.S.* p 11 ; S. IV 29.

153 Please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*".

154 *Sn.* (*SBE X*) 25, 76, 80, 88, 154, 181, 1015, 1025, 1047, 1048, 1061-62-97 etc. Mhv. (Bagchi) p 210, 214, S. IV. 30. भगवान्प्रविष्ट

155 *LV.* (*Vaidya*) p. 63.
भगवन बुद्धं शरणं गच्छामि ।

governed by this law. His repeated births depended upon his own sweet will or Abhinihāra.

In fact Bhāgvat is the most reverential term "It is essentially the same word as Slavonic bogatu, rich; Russian, bogatu, a rich man, a meaning naturally passing the same relation as the English Sir". (Kern, Manual fln. 4 p 63).

Historically viewed Bhāgavata was a sect probably founded in fifth Century A.D. in the west of India. In course of time they came to identify Vasudeva with Bhāgavata and the ancient Sun-god Viṣnu. In Mahābhārata Krishna is mentioned as divine incarnation and is called Bhāgvata.

Bhāgvata Sect is mentioned in Niddesa (Vol. I p 89 lines 19-20 : Vasudeva-vattika Vāhanti). Paṇiṇi also speaks of Vasudeva as a deity in his grammar (Vāsu-devārjunabhyāṃ vane IV. 3.98; p 198; Bhaktih IV. 3, 95, p 197). Vasudeva cult is referred in many inscriptions of 2nd C. AD.[156]

From the above references, it may be easily inferred that the use of the epithet 'Bhārgva Śakyamuni' denotes a respectful term as Kern concludes. This may be that Bhāgva term is borrowed by Buddhists to depict Buddha, not less than Vasudeva, who was god-incarnate.

(3) **Buddha**

R. Davids (Intro. DN II p 2) translates Buddha as "awakened one".[157]

In Satya-Siddhu-Śāstra (p. 11) "the mental characteristics of a Buddha are divided into three categories, each of them comprising a certain sum of qualities. (1) The ten balas or forces, (2) the eighteen Āvenika Dharmas or peculiar properties, (3) the four vaiśardhyas or points of self-confidence of assurance."[158]

In *Buddhacarita* (XVI 63),[159] he is called Buddha, because he makes wise all ignorant.

Here it may be pointed out that the word Buddha is not a proper name but an appellation, given to one who has attained enlightenment, "Nā mātarā katamna pitarā kataṃ-vimakkaṇ khantikaṃ etam buddhānam bhagavantānaṃ bodhiyāmūle...... paññati.[160]

(4) **Samma Sambuddha**[161]

This epithet, perhaps for the first time occurs twice between the episodes of the

156 Cf. Har Dayal, *Bodhisattva Doctrine*, pp 36 ff.

157 *Dhm*' 419. He is called Buddha after enlightenment. *N. Katha* pp 157, 162.

158 For Daśabal, 18 Āvenika, 4 Vaisardhyas please cf *Kern's Manual* p 62-3.

159 *SBE XLIX* p 181. Cowell interprets that here Buddha is identifying himself with his law (fln of the verse).

160 *Mahaniddesa Comy*. 458 : Patisambhidāmagga Comy (SHB), quoted by Malalaśekara *DPPN II* p 294 fln. 1).

161 *Sn. 1031* MN. I. 171 ; Vinaya I.8, 9, Kathavatthu 289, Divya 393; Mhv. III 326; I (Bagchi) pp 119-9, 210. J.II; 284. (*Dialogue*, R. Davids Intro. p 2). Sambodhi (jnāna) depends upon dharmas (गुण) (AN. IV *Mahabodhi Calcutta*, ed.) *Sambodhi Sutta* p. I).

wisdom tree and the first discourse (R. Davids Dialogue II Intro p 2). At both these places, it is associated with Arhat as its equivalent.[162]

"Sammāsambuddhas are omniscient and are teachers of Nibbāna (Sattharo)" (DPPN II. p. 294).

Sambuddha (Sn. 992, 994, 998) is perfectly enlightened one.[163] (5) *Bodhisattva* is an epithet, which in Buddhist literature, is seen changing its implications and meanings. It was used for Gautama right from the day of his conception, then many a times between his renunciation and Nirvāṇa. It has been used for all the Buddhas, from conception to Arhatship, and also for all those beings on earth (men and animals) who were ultimately to become Buddhas. "Finally it became a sort of degree of theology, and was used as a term of respect for any learned and able Mahāyāna devotee." (R. Davids, Dialogue II Intro. p 2).

The term is applied to Buddha before his enlightenment in MN. (I.17.6, I.114.24, I.163.9). "In the days before my enlightenment, when as yet I was only a Bodhisattva etc......"[164]

(6) **Dasabala**

Daśabala is title common to all the Buddhas, as every one of them is required to attain the balas (powers) before attaining that state. Satya Siddhi Sāstra (p. 5 ff) assigns the following ten powers to Buddha: (1) Sthānasthāna-jñana (knowledge of Ens and non-Ens), (2) Dharma-Samadhāna (discerning power), (3) Vimokhṣas, smadhis and their purifying effect, (4) Understanding of sharp and dull faculty, (5) Adhimukhi (=Iccha) i.e. understanding of Bhāuanāmārga, (6) Understanding of Dhatu (=abhirucci), (7) Understanding of the paths leading to heavens and hells, (8) Has knowledge about the place of birth either in the Rupa world or arupa world. (9) Divine eye to perceive three worlds and (10) Understanding of Āsıava and the stoppage of eternal streams.'[165]

162 "The title Sambuddha (or more fully Bhâgava Arhan, Samma-Sambuddha) is restricted to him when we call "The Buddha". . . . what was in Buddhism first a title open to all Bhikkhus or highest 'Comprehension' or 'enlightenment (Cf. V. 386 Sn.) came later to be confined to the Founder alone (*HOS. 37 Chalmers Intro.* p XIX).

163 Mahavastu gives the ten stages of the advance of Bodhisattvas to the attainment of Buddhi (knowledge) (*Adv. Sangh, Intro* p 12) (H.B. Shastri).

164 For the development of Bodhisattva doctrine please cf. Har Dyal's *Bodhisattva Doctrine,* p 43 ff.

165 In Kathāvatthu (III. 1) some of these powers belong to Buddha's disciples (*E.J. Thomas 2 of B* p 212).

L.V.,[166] Mahavastu,[167] and Saundernanda[168] all refer to Daśabala an epithet of Buddha. In MNA. II 196 (Cf. MN. I p 220 and fln. 5), Daśabala is praised by Pasandi, Bimbasara, Visākha, Uppalavaṇṇā, Sāriputta, Sakka, Mahābrahma and their retinue.

(7) **Divyachaksusa** (Supenatural sight)

Niddesa I (p 301)[169] refers to five eyes: manas, dibba, paññā, Buddha and Samanta eyes of Buddha.

In DN (I.87, 111, 100, III 77) Buddha with his supernatural sight could know the universe with its devas, Mārā and Brahma.

In Divyāvadana, a peculiarity of all the Buddhas is that they with their divine eye survey the world six times a day.

In Mahavastu[170] five eyes are the attributes of Buddha only and not of Pratiyeka-Buddha, Arhat etc. They are the eyes of flesh (manas chakśu), the dev-eye (divya-chakṣu), the eye of wisdom (prajña chakṣu), the eye of dhamma (dharma chakṣu) and the eye of Buddha (Buddha chakṣu).

In *Buddhacarita* XIV. 8,[171] Buddha with his divine eyesight could see the entire world, as it were in a spotless mirror.

(8) **Gautama**[172]

Buddha was known as Gautama because of his gotra (Gotamo managottena Sattha loke bhavissati (Apadana folko).[173] In Mahavagga I 54.4, Buddha's father is addressed as Gautama Mahāprajapati who belongs to Śākya race is known as Gautami, similarly Kissa Gautami, who is regarded as a Śākya girl.

In Sutta Nipāta 163 (SBE X. p. 27) the virtues of Gautama are that he is accomplished by his knowledge and conduct.

166 *P.L. Vaidya* p. 238 दशबल-अरहन

p. 270 सुगन्धगन्धामुखं दशबलस्य ।

p. 274 दशबलगुणपारमिप्राप्तम् ।

p. 273 यत्पति दशबलं गंङ्गा नदी बालिका बहुतेरभिः ।

167 *Mhv. I* (*Bagchi*) pp . 119, 213, 219.

168 *S. IV*. 46 दशबलमभितो ।

169 भगवा पञ्चहि चक्खुहि , . . मांस, दिब्ब, पञ्जां, बुद्ध, सामन्त चक्खुना ।
(*Niddesa I Pali* Ed. p. 301)

170 M*hv. I*. 158, p 124.

171 दिव्येन परिशुद्धेन चक्षुक्षा लोकमादर्शं इव निर्मलं ।

172 *DN I* (Pali) p 92, II. p 2 and 305, 153-167; Sn. 1056, 1133; LV. p 297 ; Mhv. I p 228, S X 58. For details please see my "*Aśvaghoṣa and His Times*".

173 Oldenberg, Buddha, p 411.

Telling Buddha who is worshipped to quote Suttanipāta (HOS. 1133) is :

Tamonudo Buddho Samantacakkhu
Lokontāgū Sabbhavātivatto
anāsavo Sabbādukkhappāhino
Saccavhayo, brahome upāsito me.

"The dark dispelling, all seeeing all existence, is free from passion, has left all behind all pains is rightly called Buddha". (Sn. 1132).

(9) **Tathagata**[174]

The term Tathāgata, in Buddhist literature, is exclusively applied to Samma Sambudddhas. In Pitakas it is especially used by Buddha himself, when he speaks in third person. (Vin. 1.4 cf. fln. 1 p. 82 (SBE XIII).

In Sutta Nipāta's (SBE X) Verse 236 Tathāgata indicates the perfect Dharma (personification of Buddha) and is revered by men and gods.

In verse 237 (Ibid) it is extended to Saṁgha in identical terms.

In Satya Siddhi Śāstra (p 11) he is Tathāgata because whatever he says always proves to be true.

The epithet Tathāgata for Buddha seems to have been introduced by Śautrantika school (Wass. B. p 314 quoted by Waddell Lamaism fln. 2 p. 122). The first use of the term Tathāgata in Buddha's life occurs in MN I. 168. (M. Vagga, Horner p 5, fln. 6 : Fur. Dial, I.118). In Mahāsaccasutta he is addressed as Tathāgata Gautama.

"But the term, Tathā indicates that Gautama followed (Gata) the example and experience of previous Buddhas in attaining Buddhahood," (HOS. 37. Intro Charmers, p XIX-XH).

Lalitavistara (Vaidya p. 56, 275-6 etc.) Mahavastu I (Bagchi. p 147, 210, 214 etc.) and Aśvaghoṣa (S IV 24, V. 4, 33, VI 23, XVII 70, XVIII 47) etc.. has made ample use of the epithet in most respectful terms. In Saundernanda it indicates towards the Dharmakāyā of Bodhisattva as well. (S.V. 33).

(10) **Sugata**

Buddha is called Sugata in LV. V. 31 (p 34) and in Mhv. I. 220, 152 (pp 175, 120). This may be perhaps for the reason that as soon as he was born, he took seven strides with even feet. (Samae pādei).

174 In Sumaṅgala Vilāsini Buddhaghoṣa interprets Tathāgata to mean that he came to earth for the same purpose. He had passed through the same training in former births as all the supposed former Buddhas, and that, as he had so come, all his actions correspond with theirs. *SBE. XI fln 1 p 147* Cf. Sn. 1031.

(11) **Sakka (Sakya-muni)**

He is called 'Śakyamuṇi or Śakya' (Sn. 345) because he belonged to the 'Śākya' race. In Mahavagga I. 54 his father is called 'Śakka Śuddhodana'.

The reason for being called 'Śākyamuni is given in Mahavastu. Dipaṅkara being aware of the efforts *Śākyamuṇi* has made to win enlightenment, and the vow he made, proclaims that he would win an equality with a self-becoming one (Svayambhu) and says "thou will become a Buddha, of the house of 'Śākyas, a scion of the Śākyens for the welfare of devas and men." (Mhv. I. 3)

The above names and many other flowery epithets and appallations of Buddha, in the course of time, began to be interpreted very literally. As a result, Buddha, from an ordinary human being, became possessed of supernatural powers. This deified Buddha and created great faith in the Teacher.

**Buddha's Images**

Further impetus to this idealisation was given by painters and sculptors who executed his images, with popular signs. Firstly they symbolised Buddha in Bo-tree, Vajrāsana, wheel or Swāstika sign etc. then executed numerous sculptures and paintings, depicting different episodes of his life, displaying his Ṛddhis, natural and supernatural powers.

But when was the first Buddha-Image made either in art or sculpture ?

Rudrayanāvadāna, in Divyāvadana (Ed. P.L. Vaidya. 1959 p 466 ff ), states that King Bimbasara requested Buddha to let his shadow fall upon a cloth, in order to facilitate the painting of his figure on it, which was granted. The Avadāna gives a description of preparation of a banner painting.

This points to the fact that a painting of Buddha's figure was prepared during his life time.

Korala Bimbavama (a literary text) also refers to a Sandalwood image of Buddha, prepared with his permission and placed in a monastary to console the visitors, who came to see the master from distance and were dejected to see him out.[175]

In the later literature, Mahavaṁśa refers to a golden image (in the attitude in which he received enlightenment) being placed in the relic chamber of Ravanvati Dagaba of King Dhutagamani (*161-137 BC*). This image is painted and studded with precious stones. Some images of gods are also placed in the relic chamber.

According to Chinese tradition a Sandal-wood image of Buddha was prepared by King Prasenajit of Kosala (Hand Book of Chinese Buddhism, J. Eitel, p 138) and King Udayana of Kausambi. It was placed in a large Vihara (Si-Yu-Ki I. Beal,

175 Mulk Raj Anand, *Origin of B. Image*, p 10 vide Marg Vol, XV No. 2. Mathura. March 1962.

pp 235-6). This, in the words of Buddha, was to encourage conversion. Buddha's this prophecy was fulfilled when Kaśyapa Matanga took this statue to China.[176] This was "the origin of idiolatory" and henceforth it became an object of worship (Handbook of Chinese Buddhism, J. Eitel p 138).

One Buddha-image, carved in wood and gold-lacquered, is at present lying in Berlin Museum (ref. III. 125. vide "Buddhist Art in India", by Grúnwedel, p 177).[177] Grūnwedel thinks, this is the immitation of a copy of King Udayana's sandal-wood figure of the Master, preserved in China, and connected with Gandhāra Art (Ibid pp 170-1).

This indicates that though only of sandal-wood, an image of Buddha was made during his lifetime. Kosala and Kausambi are the original homes of such an execution. However, this evidence in Buddhist literature, of making of Buddha's image during his life time, itself, is not corroborated by Archaeological finds.

Besides the local style of art, which generally did not include portraiture, there grew up a Greeco-Roman-Indian style in Buddhist portrait-sculpture in stone, clay and stucco, known as Gandhāra style in pre-christian centuries.[178] (Ibid). The Indo-Greek rule in Gandhāra was supplanted by Scythio-Pārthianas who patronised Buddhist Art. They were however ousted by Kuṣanas who, also, especially Kaniṣka, patronised Buddhism. This naturally gave a good impetus to sculptures used for idolisation of the Buddha.

176 In Tibet definite steps to the introduction of Buddhism were taken when Nepalese princess The-Chunu and Chinese princess Kong-jo, took Buddha's images with them to Tibet. (*Pag Sam Zen Zang II pt.* pp 167-169, Ed. by S.C. Dass 1908 Contents pp VIII-IX). Waddell *Lamaism* pp 20-21; Rahulji, *Yatra ke panne* p 152).

177 Fa-hein has given the account of King Prasenajit and Hiuen Thsang has given that of King Udayana (Grūnwedel, BAI, p 171).

178 Cf. *Greeco-Buddhist Art of Gandhāra*, note in Chandigarh Museum, by Dr. Charlas Fabri.

Three powerful currents of sculpture were flowing in India at that time : one at Mathura, the second at Gandhāra and the third in Deccan. In the Gandhāra School of Sculpture, great emphasis was put on realistic representation of form, after the Greek and Roman types. It was a powerful synthesis between the Hellinisic art of the West and the native Buddhist traditions of the second century (Kuṣana Period). Normally, local images did not have many clothes. The Greeco-Roman influence introduced them. As such Gandhāra image of Buddha and other Bodhi-Sattvas are shown in Royal attire with elaborate head-dress and ornaments etc. The silk serrated folds of the *dhoti* (Loin-cloth are clearly an adoption of the Roman and Greek styles. However, inspite of this influence, the Gandhāra art is exclusively Indian in form with Buddhism dominating it.

**— A.S.I. Exhibition**
**Hand Bill p. 2.**

Buddha's image in the Gandhāra sculpture is like a Greek hero god.[179] Clad in Greek type drapery in accordance with their own concept of god head e.g. Apollo (The Greek gods were beckoned from heavens to help mankind and are given human shape). Thus the early Buddha images are fashioned in the traditional Hellenist Art. (Marg. XV. 2 p. 12). "By the time of Kuṣanas two different types of portraits came to be differentiated. The Gandhāra portrait of Buddha as a man and the Mathura transformation of Buddha, the man as god." (Ibid p 12).[180] However, the best sculptures of Gandhāra Art belong to Kuṣana period (100 BC—300 AD).[181]

Here it may be pointed out that, inspite of the Greeco-Roman influence on Indian Sculpture, the impact on the painters was not much. This explains why the early Chaitya halls of pre-Christian era, Bhoja, Kondana, Pitalkhera, Ajanta caves (9 and 10) Bidesa, Nasiq, Karle etc., and the early art of Mathura and Bodh Gaya do not represent Buddha in human form, but in symbols[182] such as Stupa, bowl; umbrella, foot prints, Bo-tree and dharmacakra (the wheel).[183]

The earliest example of Buddha's image in local art has been found in Mathura, in brass-relief. Here Buddha is worshipped along with old symbols of wheel mound and Bo-tree.

The numbers of Buddhist monastries which had increased tremendously during the days of Aśoka, increased all the more in the days of Kaniṣka. These monastries with the appearance of Buddha's images began to be adorned with his images. Thus Buddha image worship became popular. He was no longer represented by symbols.[184]

When Buddha was so deified, monastries were also started to be constructed, ensharing his images in idealised human forms.

179 A Foucher, *B. Art.* p 128 says it is Hellenised Buddha or one may call it Indianised figure of Apollo. He has reproduced Pl. XI. 2 (Buddha in the Guides Mess Mardan). Cf. ill 117 in Grūnwedel's *Buddhist Art in India* p. 168. In Indian sculpture no Buddha image is found with moustache. But the old Chinese (and Japano-Korean) sculptures always gave Buddha a moustache (Grūnwedel, Ibid, p 168). Cf. Plate IIIa p. 6. C. Sivarama-Murti, A Guide Indian Museum, Calcutta.

180 Marshall and Foucher think Gandhāra Art had its origin during the Śaka occupation of the Gandhāra region in 1st C BC *JRAS, 1947*, p 12).

181 L.M. Joshi, *Buddhist contributions to Asian cultural Arts.* op. cit. p 162,

182 R.C. Sharma, *Buddha in the Art of Mathura.* pp 143-5. See Mathura Museum No. 18.1516, 14.15, 438, 10.130.

L.M. Joshi, *Buddhist Contribution to Art and Architecture* vide Contributions of Buddhism to world civilization and Culture p. 166.

183 These symbols are found on reliefs of Aśoka's period. "But Bhārhut with its reliefs determined by the inscriptions is very characteristic as compared with Sanchi and Amaravati". (*B. Art in India*, Grūnwedel, fln. I p 67).

184 N. Nath & J.P. Saxena, *Sanchi Museum*, 1981, p 8,

Not only Buddha but with the development of Mahāyāna innumerable Bodhisattvas[185] also appeared in the places of worship and adoration.

**Buddha Worship**

Mahavastu, which claims to be a Hinayana work, shows that by this time, the sect had assimilated Mahāyāna features (Winternitz. HIL II p 248). It proclaims hat "the adoration of Buddha is conducive to the realisation of Nirvāṇa". It is meritorious to circumambulate a sacred stupa and pay homage to it with flowers and other sacred things. (Mhv. I. p 248)[186] It also alludes that Buddha was worshipped by devas with fragrant flowers.

Ajanta mural cave 16 (29x27 cm.) represents preaching Buddha, while a celestial, carrying flowers on a lotus leaf, glides down from the air, to worship him. (A. Ghosh, Ajanta murals. pl. IV).

Mahāyānist Buddha-Bhakti is taught in Aśvaghoṣa's Sutralaṁkāra, specially in number 68. There Gautami ; the foster mother of Gautama, attains Nirvāṇa through the grace of Buddha (C.H.S. Ward, Buddhism, II. p. 58).

According to I-Tsing[188] (671-695 AD), the custom of worshipping the Chaitya and reciting the scriptures of Tri-ratna (Buddha, Dhamma and Saṁgha) prevailed in India. This was an ordinary service performed in the evening twilight.

Though there is no conclusive proof about the existence of Buddha images before the Greeco-Roman portraits, the coins of Kaniṣka undoubtedly bear Buddha-figure.

One type of copper coins display the king sacrificing at an altar on the *obverse*, and seated Buddha figure on the reverse. Here Buddha is shown seated cross-legged with both the arms held akimbo. The coins of Manas, have also been indentified by Longworth Dames as that of Buddha, But Whitehead, Smith, Gardner, Bachhofer and Coomaraswamy do not agree with this view. According to Smith, the coin of Kadphises has good affinity with Buddha figure. But here again, Coomaraswamy and R.C. Sharma do not agree.[189]

185 Grünwedel, *BAI* p. 184 has enumerated forty-nine or fifty prominent Bodhisattvas. Only in special instances the identification of the images of Bodhisattvas is possible, as most of them have close resemblance.

186 Mhv. 1 (Ed. Bagchi. 1970) p. 248.
तं स्तूपं दैवसिकं कांस्यपत्रिण पूजेति गन्धेन माल्येन च धूपेन च ।

187 तव देवपुत्र शतसहस्राणि सह गच्छन्ति गन्धमाल्य इस्ता बोधिसत्त्वस्य पूजार्थं
(*Mhv. I.* Bagchi p. 172).

188 *Record* p. 152.

189 *J.A.S.* XXIII. Nos. 3-4. 1983. pp 110-110 gives three photographs of seated Buddha.
P. M.C. Catalogue, Whitehead, Plt. XVIII No. 113, of. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *The Origin of* B. *image* p. 431 vide Anc. I.H.III (Pts. 1-2) 1973.
R.C. Sharma, B. *Art of Mathura*, p 152 British Museum. C. Catalogue. John Allen fig. 10.

The other type of coins represent Buddha in standing attitude with raised hands in preaching or protecting (Abhya) pose. Here he is shown holding the hem of the drapery with his left hand.[190]

A. Foucher, in his "The beginning of Buddhist Art, Pl. XIV 2" displays the reverse of Kaniṣka's coin, depicting the image of Buddha. 'Boddo' is written on it in Greek characters and the figure is in agreement with the Hellennised Buddha or Indianised figure of Apollo-the first Buddha image in chronology. (*Cf p 128*)[190a].

So it can be said without any doubt that the coins of Kaniṣka display Buddha figure. Of course, the execution of these coins shows a developed stage ; even in those times.

**Image worship**

These images of Buddha were worshipped, along with those of Bodhisattvas. *Bodhichariya, vtara* of Shantideva[191] is an evidence. It propagates Buddha worship (I. 27).[192]

Buddha, who did not believe in water oblations, his image is to be bathed and worshipped with incense, flowers, lights (earthen pots called dipas filled with oil and wicks), garlands, pearls, soft and costly clothes with the accompanyment of music and with folded hands (II. ii·12).[193] In verses 23-28 Buddha, Dharma, Saṁgha and Stupa worship is propounded.[194]

In this Mahāyāna work, not only Buddha is worshipped, but the refuge in Bodhisattvas is also advocated (II. 48·9.)[195]

Here (III. 4)[196] Buddha is evoked to enkindle jñāna in the ignorant. He is

190 *British* M.*C. Catalogue*, John Allen, fig. 14
Pl. M.C. Catalogue Pl. XX. VII.

190a Ref. Plate VII.

191 It is often called Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra in Tibetan and is translated in Tanjur (TN. 3871) by Sarvajñadeva and revised by Dharmasaribhadra and Sumitikirti. It is rendered in Chinese also (Nanjio No. 1354) (*Bodhicaryāvatāra* Intro. P, IX).

192 बुद्ध पूजा विशिष्यते ।

193 मनोज्ञन्धोदक पुष्पपूर्णैः कुम्भैर्महास्त्नमयैरनकैः ।
स्नानं करोमि तथायतानां तदात्मजानां च सगीति वाद्यम् (II. 11)

194 The tree, the wheel and the Triśula represent Buddha, Dharma and Saṁgha (K.S. Subramanian, B. *remains in S. India*, p. 14)

195 अद्यैव शरणं यामि जगन्नाथान् महाबलान् ।
जगद्ररक्षार्थं मुद्यक्तान् सर्वंत्रासहरान् जिनान् ।। (II 48)

196 सर्वासु दिक्षु संबुध्दान् प्रार्थयामि कृताञ्जलिः ।
ध्नन प्रदीपं कुर्वन्तु मोहादुःखप्रपतिना ।। (III. 4)

assigned super power of being a refuge to refugeless and a bridge to cross for the sinking in the ocean of misery (III. 17).[197]

Buddha is addressed Tathāgata (I. 20 II, 1) Bhagvāṇa Sugata Bodhisattva in commentary. (i. 34) Here he is assigned great healing powers and he who takes shelter in him never falls sick in this world again. (III. 7)[198]

A. Foucher (L of B Intro. p 3) has rightly concluded, that "the man who never reigned, continues as head of a spiritual kingdom of millions of souls. This man, who was seen daily begging in the India market places, is now represented in golden images on the alters of pagodas throughout the Far East. There he sits enveloped in the clouds of incense amid a buzz of prayers. All this, inspite of his having forbidden it, before his death. His disciples, believing him to have *supernatural intelligence* and moral power, have turned him into a god.

**Over All Review**

Buddha (563-486 B.C.) and his religion, Buddhism, came at a time, when the common man, in the society, was in the clutches of staunch Brahmanism. The religious rituals (including sacrifices), which he wanted to perform (sometimes even under social compulsions) could be carried out only by a priest (Brahmaṇa). In course of time these had become quite complex and costly too. Besides, there were class and caste differences. A sort of socio-religious disparity had been created.

Buddha's philosophy, which did not believe in castes, allowed worship to one and all, and that too in a very simple way, naturally appealed to the common man. It is not that only Buddha preached the ideas of Ahiṁsa, Anātamavada, Karam etc. The Jains, Ajivakas and Lokayatas also believed in these. But Buddha raised his voice of revolt in a very systematic and effective way, using the language of the common masses (Pāli) for his sermons.

After Buddha, the monks (Bhikṣus), to attract more and more followers, in competition with other religions, specially the Brahmaṇism, thought of magnifying the qualities of their hero, the Buddha. This is how the Lōkottara element crept in Buddhism. It also explains the introduction of (i) the Pre-Buddhas (Manuṣi-Buddhas) legend to put Buddha in line parallel to Hindu Avatāras and (ii) the Mārá legend, just parallel to Hindu God Siva's victory over Kāmadeva and many such other events in Buddhist literature.

To start with, Buddha was an ordinary human being in Hinayana. With the spread of Buddhism beyond India's (even present) boundaries, due to political and

197 अनाथानामहं नाथः सार्थवाहश्च याचिनाम् ।
परिप्लूना च नौभूतः सेतू संक्रम एव च ॥ (III 17)

198 ग्लानानाभस्मि भैषज्यंभवेयं वैद्य एव त्यः ।
तदपुस्थायकश्चैव यावद्रोगापुन भव : (III 7)

social reasons, he became a superman. He, by stages, was assigned powers of a superman, then of a deva, then more than devas i.e. dev-deva, then became god and finally super-god. However, he was never depicted as the originator of the universe, like Bramha, though could create Nirmitas' i.e. his own replicas.

He received all the respect and admiration by his followers. In the beginning. they applied the choicest vocabulary to depict the qualities of their Teacher. They chanted and repeated his sayings. All the epithets used to adore him were given literal interpretation and thus spread Buddha-Bhakti.

In the beginning, to pay respect to their Teacher, his image was executed-if literary tradition is to be relied upon, with the permission of Buddha. Kośala and Kausambi and not Gandhāra, were the first places to receive this honour. This image was first put in a Vihara. At a later stage, a large number of images were executed and placed in already constructed viharas and then viharas were constructed to install the images.

Side by side, in the struggle for existence amongst the other religious influences e.g. Brahmaṇism, etc., the philosophy of Buddha was given different interpretations and hence, changes, which were contrary to Buddha's original teachings e.g., the ideal of Tathagata, the worship of Buddhas, instead of faith in his religion (Dhamma) crept in. In this process, no doubt Buddhism, though primarily a religion confined to Madhyadeśa (Central India), spread quite fast, not only within the country amongst the common masses, but even got state patronage at the hands of great kings/emperors like Aśoka (273-236 BC) and Kaniska. As such it crossed the frontiers in the north and south and became almost a world-religion. However, instead of Buddha's original teachings, which were free from caste, creed and superstitions and idol-worship etc. there appeared a large number of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas with their spouses. All were worshipped along with Buddha. All were executed, mostly in Gandhāra Art. Ajanta and Ellora paintings are also its testimony. Besides, horrible rituals of Tantricism crept in this process of change from Hinayana to Mahāyāna by the end of the third century AD.

This, in brief, is the story of the evolution of the Buddha legend.

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